

What is Higher Ground? Is it a program for curing homosexuality?

Higher Ground was founded in January 2009 as a New York City-based lay ministry of redemptive discipleship for fellow Christians in whose lives unwanted same-sex attractions (SSA) have happened. We think of our purpose as encouraging and mentoring participants to become more mature – spiritually and emotionally – in their growth to find freedom from unwanted SSA, rather than offering purported methods of “cure” to achieve an idolatrous “100/180 outcome” of 100% eradication of any and all SSA, and a 180 degree flip toward lusting for the opposite sex (lust of any kind being a de-formation of the divine design for sanctified sexuality). We put our trust in a Person – Jesus Christ as our Savior and Good Shepherd – not in a technique.

But isn't it foolish to think that anyone can “pray away the gay”?

In this fallen world, everyone has something that needs to be prayed away.

It may not be unwanted SSA, but everyone struggles with something broken deep inside that causes grief to God's heart – and that can be life-controlling and seemingly resistant to change -- including any sexual activity outside the boundaries of gender-diverse marriage between one man and one woman. Gospel-grounded Christians know this to be true about themselves.

In Higher Ground, we do not consider same-sex erotic relating to be The Big Sin. But the temptation or reality of acting on those desires is not exempt from God's call to all Christian Believers to “be not conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)

Is it your aim then to make gay people straight?

A feature of the walk of faith for any committed Christian is the pursuit of redemptive change in his or her life. One of the changes that we in Higher Ground seek is to receive ever more of God's grace for gaining greater freedom from feeling controlled in our thoughts and actions by unwanted SSA.

To those who join our ministry, we make no promises or predictions for what God's work of renewal will look like in anyone's life, or how quickly it will arrive. For some, it may take the form of finding stable and self-giving satisfaction in sexual sobriety and singleness. For others, the process can grow in them godly new desires that lead to gender-complementary marriage; sexual enjoyment within that covenant; and the blessing of any children conceived through it – even when some residual effects from SSA may remain. Testimonies of both types of sanctified outcomes have emerged from our fellowship in Higher Ground and among others personally known to us.

Does Higher Ground offer any meetings? What happens at them?

Higher Ground offers a weekly men's group that meets once per month at our base location in New York City, with the remaining meetings taking place online. The proceedings typically run for less than 90 minutes and are not so different from any other Christian discipleship group – consisting of teaching and discussion based on Scripture readings and other texts of devotion and practical instruction; personal sharing and mutual encouragement; and prayer. The content of the meetings is tailored, however, to the special concerns of fellow Believers seeking a redemptive resolution to an inner conflict between their faith convictions and unwanted SSA.

Is Higher Ground for men only? Do you offer anything for women or for parents whose children struggle with SSA?

The great majority of inquiries about Higher Ground have so far come from men, and thus the weekly meetings are geared toward addressing the distinctive needs of men. Higher Ground has offered separate support for women, as there has been an interest in it, and presently makes referrals to other like-minded ministries in response to requests received from women. Advisory support for parents is currently provided on an ad hoc, individualized basis.

How can I find out more about Higher Ground?

If you are interested in Higher Ground for yourself or a loved one, we welcome hearing from you to arrange an informal get-acquainted conversation on Zoom, as a prelude to providing additional information for getting connected to our meetings. Feel free to email us at higherground.nyc@gmail.com or phone us at 347-593-8717, and one of our leaders will be glad to follow up with you.