**EOMU CLASS ON**

**SEX OFFENDERS**

**By Apostle James Ferguson**

1. A person who commits a crime involving a sexual act.
2. A **sex offender** (**sexual offender**, **sex abuser**, or **sexual abuser**) is a person who has committed a [sex crime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_and_the_law). What constitutes a sex crime differs by culture and legal jurisdiction. The majority of convicted sex offenders have convictions for crimes of a sexual nature; however, some sex offenders have simply violated a law contained in a sexual category. Some of the crimes which usually result in a mandatory sex-offender classification are: a second [prostitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitution) conviction, sending or receiving obscene content in the form of SMS text messages ([sexting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexting)), and relationship between young adults and teenagers resulting in corruption of a minor (if the age between them is greater than 1,060 days). If any sexual contact was made by the adult to the minor, then [child molestation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_molestation) has occurred. Other serious offenses are [sexual assault](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_assault), [statutory rape](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statutory_rape), [bestiality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bestiality), [child sexual abuse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_sexual_abuse), [female genital mutilation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Female_genital_mutilation), [incest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incest), [rape](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape), and sexual imposition.
3. [Sex offender registration laws in the United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender_registries_in_the_United_States), may also classify less serious offenses as sexual offenses requiring [sex offender registration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender_registration). In some states [public urination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_urination), having sex on a beach,[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender%22%20%5Cl%20%22cite_note-1) or [unlawful imprisonment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unlawful_imprisonment) of a minor also constitute sexual offenses requiring registration.

**Perversion** is a type of human behavior that deviates from that which is understood to be orthodox or normal. Although the term **perversion** can refer to a variety of forms of deviation, it is most often used to describe **sexual** behaviors that are considered particularly abnormal, repulsive or obsessive.

**OVERVIEW:**

In looking at various types of offenses, an example of a digital obscenity offense is [child pornography](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_pornography). In the modern world of technology, many jurisdictions are reforming their laws to prevent the over-prosecution of sex offenders and focusing on crimes involving a victim. The term [*sexual predator*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_predator) is often used to describe a sex offender or any of the "tier offenders"; however, only the category just below sexually-violent sexual predator is reserved for a severe or repeated sex offender: sexual predator.

In the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States), the [Adam Walsh Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Walsh_Act) (AWA) proposed to provide funding to each jurisdiction which would agree to incorporate its Act into their law. In the few jurisdictions accepting the agreement, there are Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III sex offenders. Individuals convicted of petty crimes not covered by the AWA are still liable to abide by the previous regulations denoting them as a sex offender (or habitual sex offender, sexual predator, sexually violent sexual predator, or child-victim offender).

In the United States, the [United Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom), and other countries, a convicted sex offender is often required to register with the respective jurisdiction's [sex offender registry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender_registration). In the U.S., registry databases are often open to the public. Sexual offenders are sometimes classified by level.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-4) The highest-level offenders generally must register for their entire lives; low-level offenders may only need to register for a period of time.

**CONTROVERSY:**

It is argued that in the U.S., sex offenders have been selected as the new realization of [moral panics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_panic) about [sex](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_activity), [stranger danger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stranger_danger), and national [paranoia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paranoia), the new [folk devils](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folk_devil) or [boogeymen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boogeyman). People convicted of any sex crime are "transformed into a concept of evil, which is then personified as a group of faceless, terrifying, and predatory devils", who are, contrary to scientific evidence, perceived as a constant threat, habitually waiting for an opportunity to attack.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Extein-27) Consequently, sex offenders are brought up by media on [Halloween](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halloween), despite the fact that there has never been a recorded case of abduction or abuse by a registered sex offender on Halloween.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Extein-27)

Academics, treatment professionals,[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-ATSA1-15)[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-ATSASorna-28) and law reform groups such as [National Association for Rational Sexual Offense Laws](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Association_for_Rational_Sexual_Offense_Laws)[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-rsol-29) and [Women Against Registry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_Against_Registry)[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-war-30) criticize current sex offender laws as based on media-driven moral panic and "public emotion", rather than a real attempt to protect society.[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Extein-27)[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-31)[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-32)[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-UniNebraska-33)[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-fox-34)[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Lancaster-35) This can motivate legislators to pass knee-jerk laws[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-36) to address public hysteria, echoing a "populist punitiveness" perspective.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-37) Many lawmakers feel that they will attract votes by appearing to be "tough on sex offenders".[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Mansnerus-38) One discrepancy pointed out by critics is that [John Walsh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Walsh_%28television_host%29), father of [Adam Walsh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_of_Adam_Walsh) and supporter of the [Adam Walsh Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Walsh_Child_Protection_and_Safety_Act), has admitted having a relationship with a 16-year-old girl while being in his early 20s and aware of age of consent being 17 in New York,[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-39) meaning that, had he been convicted, [John Walsh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Walsh_%28television_host%29) himself could be required to register as a sex offender. Since passage of the [Adam Walsh Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Walsh_Child_Protection_and_Safety_Act), Walsh himself has criticized the law, stating "You can't paint sex offenders with a broad brush."[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-40)

Critics point out that contrary to media depictions, abductions by predatory offenders are very rare[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender%22%20%5Cl%20%22cite_note-NYtimes-41) and 93% of child sexual abuse is committed by someone the child knows: a family member, a family friend, someone in a position of authority.[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-42) According to the [U.S. Department of Justice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Department_of_Justice), sex offender [recidivism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recidivism) is 5.3%,[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-43) the lowest for any type of crime except homicide.[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-44)

Critics say that, while originally aimed at the worst offenders, as a result of [moral panic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_panic) the laws have gone through series of amendments, many named after the victim of a highly publicized predatory offense, expanding the scope of the laws to low-level offenders, and treating them the same as predatory offenders, leading to the disproportionate punishment of being placed on a public [sex offender registry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender_registration), with the consequent restrictions on movement, employment, and housing.[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-war-30)[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-NYtimes-41) As a result of the media [narrative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrative) of sex offenders, highlighting egregious offenses as typical behavior of sex offenders, and distorting the facts of cases,[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Fox-45) the panic has been said to increased, leading legislators to attack [judicial discretion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_discretion),[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_offender#cite_note-Fox-45) by making registration mandatory based strictly on offense of conviction, without considering the likelihood to re-offend or the actual severity of the crime, thus punishing less serious offenders under the harsh sex offender laws.

I know the gospel is powerful enough for “normal sinners” (a ridiculous statement) like you and me, but what about a sex offender? Do I really believe what I preach to the men I work with, that the sacrifice of Jesus is greater than every sin they have ever committed? That he can forgive anything? That Jesus can redeem any of us? From the legalistic deacon who’s never really come to faith to the most heinous sex offender out there, do I believe the power of God can transform any heart, that his grace can never be outmatched?

Of course I believe that. But while God forgives and redeems even those who our society considers the worst offenders, does that mean we are supposed to treat them as though they never committed those sins? Are you being judgmental and lacking grace if you don’t let your kids walk down that certain street after you get one of those “Sex Offender Notifications” in the mail?

In other words, we know God’s love expressed in the gospel is available to everyone, but how should we respond with a Christ-like attitude towards people, like sex offenders, who have a disturbing and dangerous past?

**God’s Grace Is Greater**

In an effort to muster up the motivation to love people we find morally repulsive, sometimes we try to minimize their sins by saying things like, “Well, I’m sure that guy was probably abused as a kid,” or, “If I grew up in that environment, I might have the same view of women as him,” or, “Well, in the eyes of God my sin is just as bad as her sin.”

The instinct behind such statements is often good. We’re trying to find a perspective that will make it easier to love such hard-to-love people. But to minimize sin by coming up with reasons to lessen its damaging effects is unhelpful, and it robs God of the glory he wants to bring himself through the power of the gospel.

Jesus’s death was costly enough to earn forgiveness even for sex offenders. His resurrection was authoritative enough to bestow new life even on those who have harmed children. The power of God’s love, including its expression through the gospel, is always based in God and not the recipient.

When David committed adultery, or orchestrated murdered to cover it up, which led to the death of his baby (2 Samuel 11–12), his only way forward was to rely on the love which was based in God’s character, not his own. He started his plea of repentance with, “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions” ([Psalm 51:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%2051.1)).

Grace is offered because of God’s love, and since God’s love is unending, it can be offered to any of us regardless of our evil pasts.

**Let Your Love Be Expressed Wisely**

“Keeping no record of wrong” is an aspect of love ([1 Corinthians 13:5](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%2013.5)), but treating people as though they don’t have a tendency to sin in certain ways is not a part of forgiveness and will actually hinder our ability to love them well.

Overall, to love a sex offender well in practical ways, you will have to pray about it, consult your Bible, use discernment, listen to the counsel of others, and most of all be wise ([Colossians 4:5](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col%204.5)). Each case is so individualized it would be impossible to give you a step-by-step plan on how to love all “sex offenders” (which is a huge term covering multiple types of crimes). For example, whether he is a stranger or a family member may significantly impact your strategy in loving him.

We should seek to be wise. What would be safe? What would be non-tempting to this person? What can you realistically offer him? Questions like these need to be thought through and weighed out. With that said, here are few specifics to consider.

* Share the gospel. Whether through an anonymous letter or through building a long-term friendship, the most loving thing you can do for anyone is to share God’s plan for redemption and invitation to receive his grace.
* Lead with prayer. You can always pray for someone. Next time you get a notification in the mail about a sex offender, see it as a prayer request sent right to your door.
* Trying to build a friendship with a sex offender of the opposite sex, even if your intentions are good, is almost certainly not wise. Point him or her towards mature Christians of the same sex that can help.
* Invite him to a church that is equipped to handle his needs. Often larger churches are better for known sex offenders because such churches have developed levels of security that small churches have not, and such

**SCRIPTURES:**

[**Deuteronomy 22:22-29**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Deuteronomy/22/22)

[**Deuteronomy 23:17**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Deuteronomy/23/17)

[**Leviticus 18:6-18**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Leviticus/18/6)

[**Romans 1:26-27**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Romans/1/26)

[**Deuteronomy 27:21**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Deuteronomy/27/21)

[**Leviticus 18:22-28**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Leviticus/18/22)

[**1 Corinthians 5:1-5**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/1-Corinthians/5/1)

[**Leviticus 20:13-16**](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/Leviticus/20/13)