

Homosexuality, the Bible, and the Black Church

Resource List of Books, Websites, and video

Compiled by

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Video

Holler If You Hear Me: Gay and Black in the Church (BET production)

<http://www.bet.com/video/celebrity/2015/holler-if-you-hear-me/holler-if-you-hear-me-black-and-gay-in-the-church-full-doc.html>

Queer (Young) People: John Russell Stanger and Candace Simpson produce 5 shorts on being Queer and Christian

1. What is Queer? https://youtu.be/anzRreIqE5c?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyyfybcb

2. Oh, Leviticus:

https://youtu.be/Wda3RsWN2qA?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyyfybcb

3. The Bible Says:

https://youtu.be/AH2jcMtNDsw?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyyfybcb

4. Why Do We Stay:

https://youtu.be/gvcNTZpb7ag?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyyfybcb

5. Care for Yourself:

https://youtu.be/Bm4a8xIW2R4?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyyfybcb

Tiq Milan and Kim Katrin Milan, A Queer Vision of Love and Marriage <https://youtu.be/lwcvhh4pLjE>

Unclobbering Texts Videos by Colby Martin

Genesis 19: <https://youtu.be/69O61SOIM0E>

Leviticus: <https://youtu.be/yEiup6zkMkA>

Romans: <https://youtu.be/aZygH8d0XL0>

1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy: <https://youtu.be/5KYFuihKJ7s>

Dr. Rodney Sadler: Sex and the Bible

<https://vimeo.com/manyvoicesorg/revsadler>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/509654/when-an-evangelical-church-welcomes-lgbtq-members/>

Woman Vision has produced a video (including “All God’s Children”) and other resources that can be very helpful for African American churches.

<http://www.womanvision.org/index.html>

“All God’s Children.” <https://vimeo.com/2304279>.

Websites

Dr. Wil Gafney, Hebrew Bible Scholar: www.wilgafney.com

“Interpreting the Bible in a Nonbiblical Word”

<http://www.wilgafney.com/2016/11/06/interpreting-the-bible-in-a-non-biblical-world/>

Many Voices, A Black Church Movement for Gay and Transgender Justice

www.manyvoices.org

Dr. Obery Hendricks, Jr., “What the Bible Really Teaches About Marriage and Equality

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/obery-m-hendricks-jr-phd/what-the-bible-really-tea_b_8258542.html

Center for LGBT and Gender Studies in Religion

<https://clgs.org>

African American Roundtable of the CLGS.ORG: <https://clgs.org/our-work/roundtable-projects/african-american-roundtable/>

Books and Articles

Mark Achtemeier, *The Bible’s YES to Same-Sex Marriage: An Evangelical’s Change of Heart* (New Edition with Study Guide). Westminster/John Knox, 2015.

Victor Anderson, “The Down-Low Phenomenon in the Church,” 2013.

http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/pdf/dialogue/TheDLPhenomenon_VictorAnderson.pdf.

Valerie Bridgeman, “Just Don’t Do it, Until...: Preaching on Homosexuality,”

http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/pdf/dialogue/JustDontDoItUntil_ValerieBridgeman.pdf.

Gary David Comstock. *A Whosoever Church: Welcoming Lesbians and Gay Men into African American Congregations*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Kelly Brown Douglas. *Sexuality and the Black Church*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999.

Yvette Flunder. *Where the Edge Gathers: Building a Community of Radical Inclusion*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2005.

Robert Michael Franklin. *Another Day’s Journey: Black Churches Confronting the American Crisis*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997.

Peter J. Gomes. *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Head and Heart*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1996.

Horace Griffin. *Their Own Receive Them Not: African American Lesbians and Gays in Black Churches*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2010.

Angelique Harris. *AIDS, Sexuality and the Black Church*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2010.

Daniel A. Helminiak. *What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality* (Millennium Edition; Updated and Expanded). New Mexico: Alamo Square Press, 2000.

Jamie Manson, *Sex and the Church*, Vol. 92, No. 1. Reflections (Yale Divinity School): Spring 2006.

Stephen O. Murray and Will Roscoe. *Boy-Wives and Female Husbands: Studies in African Homosexualities*. New York: Palgrave, 1998.

Martti Nissinen, *Homoeroticism in the Biblical World: A Historical Perspective*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998.

Gerald Palmer. *The Church Has AIDS: Essays on Sexuality, Sexual Orientation, Taboos, and the Black Church*. Raleigh, NC: lulu.com, 2010.

Peter Paris. *The Social Teaching of the Black Church*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998.

Anthony B. Pinn and Dwight Hopkins. *Loving the Body: Black Religious Studies and the Erotic*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Jack Bartlett Rogers, *Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality: Explode the Myths, Heal the Church*. 1st ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

Robin Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality*. Fortress Press, 1983.

Articles on Homosexuality on The African American Pulpit website:
<http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/dialoguecorner1.asp>

PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) has an abundance of books and articles that can help members answer some of their questions about gay people in general
<http://community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=594>

Suggested Films:

“Moonlight”– 2017

“Pariah”– 2011

“Philadelphia”– 1993

“Dirty Laundry”– 2006

Hotline

The Trevor Helpline: (866) 4u-trevor

This is the only national 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention hotline aimed at gay and questioning youth. A great resource for youth in need if church may not be the safest place for discussion.

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Page 3 of 5

Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ

Facebook post, December 12, 2016, shared with permission

1. My understanding of holiness has shifted over time. My earlier understandings were black & white and grounded in the fear of hell. My current understandings are grounded in the belief that it is the love of God (not a fear of hell) that constrains me. Salvation, for me, is not fire insurance, but it is a call to live out Micah 6:8, which is the best definition of holiness I've seen... "what does the Lord require of you? ...Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly before the Lord your God."
2. The word 'fornication' gets thrown around it's often assumed that the Bible is clear. The word from which it is derived, pornea, is complicated and its meaning has shifted over time. Here's one resource. <http://www.religioustolerance.org/pornea.htm>
3. I'm tired of lazy interpretations of biblical holiness... lazy interpretations of human sexuality... lazy interpretations of ancient texts without regard to the nuances of the original languages and social context. Just tired. Yes, holiness is still right... and so is biblical exegesis, integrity and telling the truth about who you are. [#yourstruggleisshowing](#)
4. For those folks in the church who think that gay and lesbian folks are despicable and abominations, please inbox me a list of 10 of your favorite gospel songs. We'll have a private chat about who God loves, what God uses and what God hates. Please also include a list of the last 10 guest preachers who've preached at your church.
5. The day I got free was the day I accepted the truth that the anointing and the call of God did not require me to tell a lie about who I was/was not.
6. I just watched two clips from church services from yesterday where preachers chastised people for so-called sexuality immorality. Present in both of these churches were considerable numbers of gay men. I'm responding because I know firsthand the dysfunction and depression that's caused by hearing Sunday after Sunday that you are defective and your love is perverted. This week, I'm calling it out. Delete or hide me now if this offends you.
7. Because so many of these conversations happen in isolated circles, over the next few days, I'm going to be posting accessible resources (mainly videos) for persons who want to dig deeper into conversations around what the Bible says (and does not say) about human sexuality, fornication, LGBTQ persons and more.
8. I've watched Pastor E. Dewey Smith as he has wrestled with the scriptures as they relate to issues of human sexuality and gender identity. To be sure, he's still in process and I hope that he will continue to evolve and reconcile his beliefs with his practice of ministry. I applaud him for being bold enough to ask some of the right questions. In this talk, he names some of the critical questions and issues regarding how the gifts of same gender loving folks have been pimped by the church. He also names problematic theologies of sexuality and singleness. "When it is believed that by 2020 that 50 - 55% of black women will never get married... Do we really have the expectation that 50 - 50% of our women to live a life of celibacy? ...we've caused people to live lives that are lies." - Rev. E. Dewey Smith. Great discussion with Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, Pastor Smith moderated by Darnell Moore.
http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid2494727306001?bckey=AQ%7E%7E%2CAAA_B_IJDjkE%7E%2CZZV_Jw5j6Ec5yfBfRZRFB5oocpcRkbCf&bctid=4790163405001
9. What I inboxed to someone this morning... "From its inception, the church has evolved. Central to this evolution has always been questions of who's in and who's out, what part of one's identity must one give up to be in. The leaders church of the church at Jerusalem espoused many of your same positions. Their positions were couched in resistance to change and the inability to parse out the cultural/tribal elements of Jewish faith. The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch also represented a similar turning point. "What hinders me from being baptized?" is still the relevant question. In the Jewish worldview, a Eunuch was defective and forbidden from being in the inner court. The same is true for today's LGBT community. The church is losing its relevance because it has continually tried to occupy a place it was never meant to occupy; defending God and all things

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Page 4 of 5

holy. The church of Jesus Christ is meant to be a place of radical inclusion for the most marginalized and misunderstood within our society and women who were once (and still) viewed as property, LGBTQ folks, and immigrants just to name a few a certainly a part of that grouping. Jesus' harshest criticisms were reserved not for the so-called sinful but for those who repeatedly sought to shut the doors to the Kingdom of God and dispense grace and love based on their terms and narrow interpretation. My brother, let go of your need to keep the church 'pure' and 'clean.' Love people. That's it, that's all. Love the people and God will clean and keep the church."