

Faith/Religion and LGBTQ

HIGHLY Recommended for all:

God and the Gay Christian, Matthew Vines

Feeling the tension between his understanding of the Bible and the reality of his same-sex orientation, Matthew Vines devoted years of intensive research into what the Bible says about homosexuality.

Unclobbered, Colby Martin

Unclobber reexamines the six frequently quoted "clobber" passages of Scripture, alternating with author Colby Martin's own story of being fired from an evangelical megachurch when they discovered his stance on sexuality.

Torn, Justin Lee

As a teenager and young man, Justin Lee felt deeply torn. Nicknamed "God Boy" by his peers, he knew that he was called to a life in the evangelical Christian ministry. But Lee harbored a secret: He also knew that he was gay. In this groundbreaking book, Lee recalls the events that led him to self-acceptance.

Bible, Gender, Sexuality, James Brownson

This thought-provoking book by theologian James Brownson develops a broad, cross-cultural sexual ethic from Scripture, locates current debates over homosexuality in that wider context, and explores why the Bible speaks the way it does about same-sex relationships. (*A dense book but highly recommended!*)

Walking the Bridgeless Canyon, Kathy Baldock

In 2001, Kathy Baldock, a straight conservative evangelical Christian, met Netto Montoya, a lesbian Native American, on a local hiking trail near her home in the Sierra Nevada. Their developing friendship challenged Baldock's cultural and religious beliefs about the LGBTQ community.

A Letter to My Congregation, Ken Wilson

A breakthrough work coming from the heart of evangelical Christianity, Wilson shows how God has led him on a journey toward a rethinking of what the fully authoritative and inspired Bible ought to be taken to mean in the life of the church today.

Changing our Mind, David Gushee

In *Changing Our Mind*, Christian ethicist and public intellectual David Gushee takes the reader along his personal and theological journey as he changes his mind about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender inclusion in the Church.

The Bible's Yes To Same Sex Marriage: An Evangelical's Change of Heart, Mark Achtemeier

In the early 2000's, Mark Achtemeier embarked on a personal journey with the Bible that

led him from being a conservative, evangelical opponent of gay rights to an outspoken activist for gay marriage and a fully inclusive church. In *The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage*, Achtemeier shares what led to his change of heart: the problems with excluding groups of people and the insights into the Bible's message that led him to recognize the fullness of God's love and support for LGBT persons. Readers will discover how reading snippets of Scripture out of context has led to false and misleading interpretations of the Bible's message for gay people. Achtemeier shows how a careful reading of the whole Scripture reveals God's good news about love, marriage, and sexuality for gay and straight people alike.

Memoirs and Stories:

***How We Sleep at Night*, Sara Cunningham**

A christian mother comes to terms with her son being gay through a personal journey that starts with the Church and ends at the Pride Parade. Called a " is an intimate, real, often emotionally raw, ultimately challenging, spiritual and emotional memoir."

***Refocusing My Family: Coming Out, Being Cast Out, and Discovering the True Love of God*, Amber Cantorna**

In 2012, at the age of twenty-seven, Amber Cantorna came out to her family as gay. As the daughter of a Focus on the Family executive, that transparency cost her everything. *Refocusing My Family* is Amber's journey from the suffocating expectations of Focus on the Family to the liberating joy of claiming her own identity.

***Risking Grace*, Dave Jackson**

Risking Grace is a father's story about his agonizing personal journey of coming to realize that evangelicals have lost their way when it comes to gay people by substituting a works/righteousness requirement for the clear Gospel message that salvation comes by grace through faith alone.

***He's Always Been My Son: A Mother's Story about Raising Her Transgender Son*, Janna Barkin**

This inspiring and moving story, told from the heart of an extraordinary family, recounts the emotional and uplifting journey of raising a transgender son.

***Crossing*, Deirdre McCloskey**

Crossing is the story of Deirdre McCloskey (formerly Donald), once a golden boy of conservative economics and a child of 1950s and 1960s privilege, and her dramatic and poignant journey to becoming a woman.

***Shattering Masks*, Laura Beth Taylor**

Who am I? It's a simple question. Yet most of Laura Beth Taylor's life, the answer was

incredibly elusive. *Shattering Masks* is the story of how Taylor came to reconcile her faith in God with living a genuine, authentic life.

Raising Ryland: Our Story of Parenting a Transgender Child with No Strings Attached, Hillary Whittington

a transparent and authentic telling of one mother's first-hand account of her emotional choice to embrace her transgender child.

I Promised Not To Tell, Cheryl B. Evans

a deeply personal parenting memoir about raising a transgender child. A genuine, heartfelt and unforgettable LGBT memoir not to be missed.

Space at the Table, Brad Harper and Drew Harper

Can a theologian and his gay son overcome the differences in belief that threaten to destroy their relationship? For Brad and Drew Harper, that question wasn't theoretical—and neither was the resounding yes they found after years of struggle.

Above All Things: The Journey of an Evangelical Christian Mother and Her Gay Daughter, Shari Johnson

Shari Johnson's world turned upside down the night her 37-year-old daughter called and told her that she was gay. This just couldn't be possible. Cholene had always been the hero—Air Force Academy graduate, second woman to fly the U-2 spy plane, captain for United Airlines – she cried, begged, pleaded with God to change Cholene, but he changed Shari instead.

Transparently: Behind the Scenes of a Good Life, Lisa Salazar

It wasn't always clear to Santiago Salazar that somewhere inside him was a Lisa that would someday—a long time into the future—show herself to the world. A must read for anyone who struggles to understand their own gender identity, or a friend's or loved one's—especially when faith is central in their life. *Transparently* is an engaging story, told by a brave woman who made the call to accept what she knew she was, and had always been.

Excluded, Julia Serano

As a trans woman, bisexual, and femme activist, Julia has spent years challenging forms of exclusion within feminist and queer/LGBTQ movements. In *Excluded*, she chronicles these instances of exclusion and argues that marginalizing others often stems from a handful of assumptions that are routinely made about gender and sexuality.

The Other Boy, M.G. Hennessy

A beautifully heartfelt story about one boy's journey toward acceptance. A book that Jill Soloway, the award-winning creator of *Transparent*, called a terrific read for all ages and Ami Polonsky, author of *Gracefully Grayson*, called an emotionally complex and achingly real read.

Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family, Amy Ellis Nut

an inspiring true story of a transgender girl, her identical twin brother, and an ordinary American family's extraordinary journey to understand, nurture, and celebrate the uniqueness in us all.

My Son, Eric, Mary V. Borhek

A classic account of a mother's struggle to understand and accept her gay son — from denial to reconciliation to activism.

This Is My Body, Christina Beardsley

This Is My Body offers a grounded reflection on people's experience of gender dissonance that involves negotiating the boundaries between one's identity and religious faith, as well as a review of the most up-to-date theological, cultural and scientific literature.

She's Not There, A Life in Two Genders, Jennifer Finney Boylan – the story of a person changing genders, the story of a person bearing and finally revealing a complex secret

Transgender Specific:

Trans Bodies, Trans Selves, Laura Erickson-Schroth

Trans Bodies, Trans Selves is a revolutionary resource—a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide for transgender people, with each chapter written by transgender or genderqueer authors.

Transgender 101, Nicholas M. Teich

Written by a social worker, popular educator, and member of the transgender community, this well-rounded resource combines an accessible portrait of transgenderism with a rich history of transgender life and its unique experiences of discrimination.

The Transgender Child, Stephanie A. Brill and Rachel Pepper

Through extensive research and interviews, this comprehensive first-of-its-kind guidebook explores the unique challenges that thousands of families face every day raising their children in every city and state.

The Transgender Teen, Stephanie A. Brill

This book is the perfect follow up to *The Transgender Child*. It gently guides readers through the steep learning curve that often comes with supporting a transgender or non-binary teenager through their gender journey and helping them navigate their daily lives. Thoughtful and thorough, this book is a certainly a must read for parents and professionals.

Transforming: The Bible and the Life of Transgender Christians – provides access into an underrepresented and misunderstood community and will change the way readers think about transgender people, faith, and the future of Christianity. By introducing transgender issues and language and providing stories of both biblical characters and real-

life narratives from transgender Christians living today, Hartke helps readers visualize a more inclusive Christianity, equipping them with the confidence and tools to change both the church and the world.

The Bible and the Transgender Experience: How Scripture Supports Gender

Variance, Linda Tatro Herzer – The Bible and the Transgender Experience explores: Whether or not God creates only two genders. Gender variant groups and individuals in scripture. What Jesus had to say about gender variance and various understandings of “the cross-dressing passage”

Christian Specific:

A Bigger Table, John Pavlovitz

A Bigger Table offers the wise reflections of a pastor with a heart like Jesus and a life journey that has led him to reject much of organized American Christianity. Radical hospitality, total authenticity, true diversity, and agenda-free community are the four marks of the bigger table that John is calling Christians to build and gather around.

Reasonable Doubt: A Case for LGBTQ Inclusion in the Institutions of Marriage and Church – **Scott McQueen**

Scott McQueen, a Southern Baptist pastor of 31 years, shares what he learned after his son came out as gay and makes a case for churches to be fully inclusive. Whether you are a member of the LGBTQ community desiring biblical affirmation, a straight family member of an LGBTQ individual, who is attempting to sort out all the obvious questions or a conservative Christian who has always been taught that same-sex behavior is condemned by God, this book is for you.

Unashamed: A Coming Out Guide for LGBTQ Christians – **Amber Cantorna**

How does one reconcile their sexuality with their faith? Depression, despair, and thoughts of suicide often haunt LGBTQ Christians as they feel unable to imagine the possibility of living a happy, fulfilling life as an LGBTQ person of faith. As the gay daughter of a thirty-plus-year executive of conservative Christian organization Focus on the Family, Amber lost everything when she came out as gay in 2012. However, her journey to embrace her authenticity brought her fulfillment and wisdom to share. *Unashamed* serves as a guide for Christians considering coming out, tackling tough subject matters such as demolishing internalized homophobia, finding an affirming faith community, reestablishing your worth as a child of God, navigating difficult family conversations (especially in cases where family is involved in church leadership/ministry), and healing from the pain of rejection. *Unashamed* encourages LGBTQ Christians to embrace their unique identities and to celebrate the diversity placed inside them by God.

What Does God Think? Transgender People and The Bible – Cheryl Evans

From the award-winning author of *I Promised Not to Tell: Raising a transgender child* comes this thought provoking new book, *What Does God Think?* Presented with the idea that her transgender child was “not of God”, Cheryl B. Evans set out to see what God really thinks about transgender people. What does the Bible say? Why is there such a big divide among Christians? Why do some Christians insist there is no such thing as a transgender person while other Christians accept and affirm transgender people? And most importantly, what does God think?

A Brief Guide to Ministry with LGBTQIA Youth – Cody Sanders

the book challenges pastors and church leaders to reflect on the various trials that adolescence brings for LGBTQIA youth and is designed for congregations that currently have a theologically and biblically affirming stance toward the LGBTQIA community. The book helps answer questions such as: How does an affirming stance toward LGBTQIA people affect the day-to-day experience of teenagers in a church setting?

In what ways can a church’s youth ministry have a positive impact on the lives of LGBTQIA youth who want to fully live out their Christian faith and their gender identity?

How can a pastor, youth minister, or youth ministry volunteer embrace, nurture, and provide skillful care for LGBTQIA youth in a congregation or community?

A glossary of terms to use when talking about LGBTQIA issues and a list of national and location resources that can be used to support LGBTQIA youth are included.

Bulletproof Faith: A Spiritual Survival Guide for Gay and Lesbian Christians,

Candace Chellew-Hodge

This thoughtful, practical guide shows readers a way through the minefield of condemnation and persecution faced by LGBT Christians and helps foster a faith that is bulletproof.

Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America, Mel White

In a touching autobiographical account, this former Christian filmmaker and ghostwriter for fundamentalist Christians Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson describes his many attempts to become straight, followed by the difficult process of coming out to himself, his peers... and his wife.

Does Jesus Really Love Me?, Jeff Chu

In this timely work—part memoir, part investigative analysis—a prize-winning writer explores the explosive and confusing intersection of faith, politics, and sexuality in Christian America. When Jeff Chu came out to his parents as a gay man, he knew that he had to get to the heart of a question that had been haunting him for years: Does Jesus really love me?

Rainbow Theology, Patrick S. Cheng

Rainbow Theology is the first book to reflect upon the theological significance of the

intersections of race and queer sexuality across multiple ethnic and cultural groups. This is particularly important in light of the current polarizing debates over issues of race, sexuality, and religion within churches and communities of faith around the world.

Rescuing Jesus, Deborah Jian Lee

With empathy, journalistic rigor, and powerful storytelling, Lee unpacks the diverse and complex strands of the progressive Christian movement—and how people of color, women, and queer Christians are reclaiming evangelicalism. Given the clout that evangelicals still hold in national politics, this movement is important for the future of our country.

Holy Terror: Lies the Christian Right Tells Us to Deny Gay Equality, Mel White

This is a tour-de-force recent history of evangelicalism morphing into the Religious Right, by someone who helped make this history and was Jerry Falwell's former speechwriter. This is an insider's expose about the origins of the Christian fundamentalist movement and how its virulent anti-gay agenda has led to the rise of the Tea Party movement, among other forms of recent right wing extremism.

God's Gay Agenda, Sandra Turnbull

An excellent summary of the Biblical counter-argument to the anti-gay agenda by a conservative, evangelical, Spirit-filled charismatic pastor! Not only does Pastor Turnbull offer a passionate reading of scripture, grounded in faith that moves within the circle of Biblical texts invoked in the debates over homosexuality but she also specifically addresses God's purpose for gays and lesbians.

Dirt, Greed, and Sex: Sexual Ethics in the New Testament and Their Implications for Today, William Countryman

If you find some progressive Christians' arguments regarding sexual ethic 'lazy' or 'shallow' but cannot stomach the all-too-certain conservative alternative, this book by a respected biblical scholar is for you. It's thorough, clear and lucid ... some have even claimed it to be life-changing. (Make sure you get the updated version published in 2007 as it has some excellent additions including a new chapter engaging the presumed "ethic of creation") Gay, Straight, and the Reason Why by Simon LeVay is a review of scientific research of sexual orientation, in humans and in the animal kingdom.

Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality, Jack Rogers

Jack Rogers makes a biblical case for equal rights for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). Throughout history, he observes, Christianity has moved towards ever greater openness and inclusiveness. Today's church is led by many of those who were once excluded: people of color, women, and divorced and remarried people. He argues that when we interpret the Bible through the lens of Jesus redemptive life and ministry, we see that the church is called to grant equal rights to all people.

God Believes in Love: Straight Talk about Gay Marriage, Gene Robinson

From the IX Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire in the Episcopal Church, the first openly gay person elected to the episcopate and the world's leading religious spokesperson for gay rights and gay marriage—a groundbreaking book that persuasively makes the case for same-sex marriage using a commonsense, reasoned, religious argument.

Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today, Adam Hamilton

The book begins with basic questions such as, How and when was the Bible written? Who decided which books made it into the scriptures and why? How literally must we read it? And, Is the Bible ever wrong? From there, Hamilton considers the real questions people frequently ask that continue to divide Christians and denominations alike.

The Sin of Certainty, Peter Enn the author of *The Bible Tells Me So* explains how Christians mistake “certainty” and “correct belief” for faith when what God really desires is trust and intimacy.

Oriented to Faith, Tim Otto

With gentle wisdom and compassionate insight, Tim Otto tells the story of his struggle with being gay and what that taught him about the gospel. With an authentic and compelling personal voice, Tim invites us to explore how God is at work in the world, even amidst the most difficult circumstances, redeeming and transforming the church through this difficult debate.

Sex Difference in Christian Theology, Megan DeFranza

How different are men and women? When does it matter to us—or to God? In *Sex Difference in Christian Theology*, Megan DeFranza explores such questions in light of the Bible, theology, and science.

The Children Are Free, Jeff Miner and John Tyler Connoley

In *The Children Are Free*, Rev. Jeff Miner and Rev. John Tyler Connoley offer a comprehensive yet easy-to-read examination of the biblical evidence regarding loving same-sex relationships and God's attitude toward them.

The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage, Mark Achtemeier

Mark Achtemeier embarked on a personal journey with the Bible that led him from being a conservative, evangelical opponent of gay rights to an outspoken activist for gay marriage and a fully inclusive church.

Changing our Mind, David Gushee

In *Changing Our Mind*, Christian ethicist and public intellectual David Gushee takes the reader along his personal and theological journey as he changes his mind about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender inclusion in the Church.

Our Lives Matter, Pamela R. Lightsey

Lightsey helps readers explore the impact of oppression against Black LGBTQ women while introducing them to the emergent intellectual movement known as queer theology. The author privileges their narratives and experiences as she reviews several doctrines and dogma of the Christian church.

Specifically for LGBT:

The Velvet Rage, Alan Downs

Today's gay man enjoys unprecedented, hard-won social acceptance. Despite this victory, however, serious problems still exist. Substance abuse, depression, suicide, and sex addiction among gay men are at an all-time high, causing many to ask, "Are we really better off?"

Coming Out to Parents: A Two-Way Survival Guide for Lesbians and Gay Men and Their Parents, Mary V. Borhek

An indispensable resource for those coming out to their parents and for the parents themselves.

Not Specifically LGBTQ but highly recommended:

Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead, Brene Brown

Fiction with LGBTQ Themes:

This Is How It Always Is, Laurie Frankel – *This is how* a family keeps a secret...and how that secret ends up keeping them. *This is how* a family lives happily ever after...until happily ever after becomes complicated. *This is how* children change...and then change the world. This is Claude. He's five years old, the youngest of five brothers, and loves peanut butter sandwiches. He also loves wearing a dress, and dreams of being a princess. When he grows up, Claude says, he wants to be a girl. Rosie and Penn want Claude to be whoever Claude wants to be. They're just not sure they're ready to share that with the world. Soon the entire family is keeping Claude's secret. Until one day it explodes.

The Choice, Melody Robinette

An extraordinary story of a teen coming to terms with her sexuality.

Just Juliet, Charlotte Reagan

The coming out story that will completely change the way you look at love.

Juliet represents the road less traveled. Will Lena take it?

Lena Newman is 17, her best friend's a cheerleader, her boyfriend's a football player, and as far as everyone is concerned, her life is sorted. But that's before she befriends the new girl.

Juliet is confident, slightly damaged, drop-dead gorgeous and a lesbian.

Loving Lakyn, Charlotte Reagan

Lakyn James is sixteen years old and hating every second of it. Re-entering normal life after `trying` to take his own is weird. Especially when the world keeps going on like it never happened. He still has to eat breakfast, go to school, and somehow convince a cute boy that he's too damaged to date.

13 Beautiful Books Every LGBTQ Teen Should Read