*Lord, help us to be inspired by this – motivated by this – driven by this – moved by this – and to love you all the more because of this truth. Amen*

Intro

* Always a clash between X – culture. Further our culture gets from the Bible, more we feel like exiles – strangers – to the world around us. For us, 2018 – biggest clash between faith and culture is over sexuality.
* 2-3 mins on this passage – fundamentally v simple – then tackle homosexuality head-on – discussion – videos.
  + 1 of only 6 passages in B where hsx is discussed[[1]](#endnote-1).
  + Lawsuits going on – shows /allowed the gospel to change you. Gospel is all about forgiveness – grace – kindness. J showed that at the cross – died in place of /friends – enemies. Extends forgiveness to all ppl.
    - So if you’re not radically changed by gospel - /forgive - /understood gospel properly.
  + **v9** – more examples – if there’s sexually immorality - idolise ppl or things – adultery – theft – greed – drinking too much – gossiping – lying about ppl – cheating ppl out of money – of homosexual behaviour – characterise ch – or ppl’s lives – big problem.
    - /Kingdom behaviour. Ppl like that /inherit the kingdom of God.
    - Kingdom ppl are different – changed inside – slowly change outside too.
    - 1:2 B/c in X – sanctified – made holy – changed – renewed – inside. If outside isn’t heading in that same dirn, got to question whether the inside is actually changed at all.
* Now, homosexuality this evening.
  + First, note 9 sins listed there: sexually immorality - idolatry - adultery – homosexual behaviour - theft - greed - drunkenness - slander – swindling
    - 6 of 9 - /do w sex – only 1 is homosexual behaviour.
    - This is not our priority – only really mentioned in passing. The way some Xns talk it’s as if homosexuality is the greatest issue facing humanity today.
    - Totally not – sin is the biggest issue – rebellion against God – refusing to let him lead – that’s the biggest issue facing humanity today. Every individual sin – in all their many forms – 9 – start w a heart that refuses to bow to our maker.
      * Want to say to us tonight: for someone who identifies as gay, that is not their biggest problem – who they kiss – sleep with - /biggest sin – unbelief is. Just like it is for the rest of us.
    - Root of sin is universal – just different fruit in different ppl.
* But having said that – prob all know someone who identifies as gay – some v close – family – practical response?

Hear from 4 ppl who have walked this road:

* **Vaughan Roberts[[2]](#endnote-2)** – St Ebbe’s, Oxford - author[[3]](#endnote-3) (5:27)
  + So much in there:
    - SSA rather than gay. “Gay” tied to identity & culture.
    - Brokenness – all of us
    - Pain – but sp benefit: /pride – understanding others’ brokenness
    - Need friendship

Groups:

***How do you think LGBTQ ppl view the church, especially evangelicals? Do you think they are right in their assumptions?***

* Placard-waving campaigners? Angry – hateful – threatening.
  + Fundamental – antichrist flaw - in WestbroBaptist – see the world as them and us – good ppl & bad ppl. When it’s really: bad ppl & Jesus. All bad – just in different ways.
* Ignorant – stereotyped
* Moralistic
  + Not the gospel!

**Testimony of Rosaria Butterfield**[[4]](#endnote-4)(7:58)

* Happy lesbian! Strong community. Educated. Moral.
* Pastor talked to her about fall – brokenness in everyone, /her sins
* Attraction for her was Jesus

***What do you think it means for someone who is part of the gay community to become a Christian? What added barriers might there be than for a heterosexual person?***

* Gay – identity – many Xn’s use language of SSA – Vaughan Roberts. Change whole identity
* Embarrassment – humiliation – common to hetero – but maybe more – like if you were an outspoken atheist.
* Losing friends, strong community, intimacy, friendship, home.

**Want to win ppl from gay community?** – Rosaria Butterfield again**[[5]](#endnote-5)** (1:43)

* Losing -> humble - /moral proclamations instead of gospel invitations
* “The strength of your words needs to match the strength and integrity of your relationship.”
* “If you want to put the hands of the lost into the hands of the saviour you have to get close enough to get hurt.”

**Language of temptation.**

* Look back at that list in 1Cor 6 – some of us tempted towards drunkenness – Xn – want to please X more than self – avoid places where ppl are drinking – tee-total – weakness – v great temptation.
* **Jackie Hill-Perry[[6]](#endnote-6)** – poet – SSA (2:26)
  + Temptation /sin! J was tempted. Tempted in every way (Hebrews 4:15) – yet he did not sin.
  + If you really love the Lord, you will want to obey him.
  + Was Jesus tempted sexually – yes!

**Where do we go from here?**

* Bible clear: sexuality only expressed in marriage – 1 man – 1 woman. V real problem for Xns who feel attracted to same sex.
  + Historic – Biblical soln: singleness – celibacy.
* Very likely there are ppl in church who experience some kind of SSA now. No-one public. One day: will be. How can we be a church that cares for ppl with SSA?
  + **Sam Allberry[[7]](#endnote-7) – pastor Maidenhead** – author – Trinity. (1:50)

***How can we make our church a place where people who love J but who experience SSA – can flourish?***

* Elevate friendship - Biblical
* Make singleness a viable option
* Not be obsessed w marriage – /assume everyone wants to be paired off
* Not obsessed w kids – some ch – all about the youth ministry – hard for single ppl
* Benefits of singleness – ch7
* Treat single ppl with dignity – involve - /scared
* If /Xn – treat as any other non-Xn – welcoming – sins are /biggest problem.

**End with Jackie Hill-Perry – Only Jesus can make me whole[[8]](#endnote-8)** – poet - SSA

* We are far more than just our sexuality. Our identity as a whole needs to be reconciled back to the Father.

Really helpful Q&A from a Christian leader who self-identifies as gay. I don’t agree with him on lots of things, but the conversation is a model of loving, Christlike engagement. <https://rachelheldevans.com/blog/ask-a-gay-christian-response>

1. Genesis 19 – Judgement on Sodom; Leviticus 18:22, 20:13 – Jewish law about legitimate sexual relations; Romans 1:18-32 – highlights what happens when a culture abandons God and idolises other things – sexuality is one example; 1Timothy 1:8-10 – homosexual behaviour goes against the new identity Christians have received. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Original video here: <https://vimeo.com/80605751> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. <http://stebbes.org> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Original video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoFmwsOCd6o> [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Original video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVF3KzuCKVI> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Original video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XG2bZJpueKs> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Original video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJdEZv_24Uk> [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Original vide here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDlaRLdlJHc> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)