

Hello. I'm a member of your congregation. I find your recent series on homosexuality an interesting discussion. I don't intend to cause an argument, but this series has, if anything, spurred on the distaste (to put it mildly) for LGBT+ folk like myself. I am a transgender man and though I can't name anyone else in particular, I'm sure there are other members of my community in this congregation, but they don't speak up about it for fear of ostracization and harsh judgement. And there's plenty of that to be found in this country.

I don't speak out, even when my family says some very unloving things. Violent jokes about causing actual physical harm, unfair judgement, inhospitality, repulsion and a glaring lack of kindness. They've said that gay people are not at all welcome in church, and that a church accepting gays and trans people is a church that doesn't have God.

They have no idea what they say hurts. If I told them, I'm not sure I'd have a home. I am afraid for my physical and mental wellbeing. I struggle day to day with depression. I go to your church but I don't feel like I belong, being surrounded by people who would push me out, saying I'm not welcome.

You have told everyone at the end of your sermons in this series, "people are not the enemy". I'm afraid my family doesn't think that way, and I'm sure there's others in the congregation who share the same attitude.

Anti-gay Christians are not a minority. If anyone is a minority, it is the LGBT+ community, but especially us who are also Christian. I wasn't pushed to be transgender or queer by anyone. I didn't know I was either until I got older. Without being told outright what being gay is, it was instilled in me to be avoidant and averse to anything not straight. When I was a child, I didn't know other trans people existed or that transgender was a word. I didn't know what a lesbian was until I became a teenager. Trans people are a scapegoat in America right now, just as other minority groups are and have been for decades.

You say, "I hope this lesson will be an encouragement to you" and in some way it is, I appreciate your ministry. But when I get home on Sunday, I cry in secret because if anyone knew why, I might not have a home.

I'm afraid that when I send you this message, somehow my family will know it's me. I want them to know and I would have come out already if I knew I would still have a family or somewhere to go. But I have nowhere and nobody to turn to but the Lord. I'm told even the Lord doesn't want me. I don't believe that, though sometimes it gets to me and I have another episode of self-hatred.

What I deal with, day to day, waking up in a body I don't see myself in but everyone insists is me, among other things, is really taking its toll on my mental health. I'm afraid for my physical and emotional wellbeing if I were to come out to my family. I'm not sure what would happen.

I don't know how much more I can take. Every Sunday and even during the week, I consider hurting or killing myself somehow. I have no real plans to carry it out, and I don't want to go through with it, I just want the pain to stop. I lie in bed sometimes and plead and pray to be "normal". I cry until my whole body aches and my whole face is wet and I can't breathe. But I can't change it, I can't control it, and I didn't choose it. What does that mean for me?

Other people, gay and transgender alike, throughout their whole lives, pray to be straight and/or cisgender (the opposite of trans) but they never change. It's not for a lack of trying, either. They can be the most godly, faithful believers and yet they're still the same. They can be celibate or marry the opposite sex and have children, and they're still gay or trans. Suppressing it or trying to distract yourself from it does no good, and it bears bad fruit. Some end themselves because the church offers them no hope or love.

According to Galatians 5:22, some of the fruits of the Spirit are love, peace, kindness, and gentleness. Nothing I've heard from Christians who oppose LGBT+ people makes me think they're being loving, gentle, kind and certainly not peaceful.

How can a loving relationship between a couple, regardless of gender or sex, be wrong if it bears good fruit and puts God first?

I know straight couples who have bad marriages. What fruit, other than the fruit of children they've raised, is there? Arguments, domestic violence, cheating, unhealthy coping methods (like drinking, drug abuse, smoking, among others) etc are all bad fruits. How is a marriage like that more holy than a healthy same-sex relationship centered around God? Because of the sex of the people involved?

I was proud of my bigotry, but I never thought about the people I hurt with what I said or did, the people I may have driven to harm themselves or worse. I had to find out all on my own why I don't fit in with other people, and now I feel I have to navigate this alone or risk endangering my own life. It's a risk whether I come out or stay closeted.

I pray that you can learn as I did. And I hope the people in your congregation who have gay or trans friends or family, or are gay or trans themselves, aren't pushed away or have to suffer with suicidal thoughts or actions as I have.

Here are a few resources you may find enlightening. I did, and I hope the other people in the congregation will also find it so.

<https://reformationproject.org/case/>

<https://geekyjustin.com/christianity-lgbtq/bible>

<https://www.gaychurch.org/homosexuality-and-the-bible/>

Some books:

[Torn](#) by Justin Lee

[God and the Gay Christian](#) by Matthew Vines

[Walking the Bridgeless Canyon](#) by Kathy Baldock

[Scripture, Ethics, and the Possibility of Same-Sex Relationships](#) by Karen Keen

[Bible, Gender, Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships](#) by James Brownson

[Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century](#) by Professor John Boswell

Thank you for reading this message. If it changes nothing, at least I tried. Much love and God bless you.