



# **Participant Study Guide**

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# Bridging the Gap

## Welcome to: Bridging the gap

This resource has emerged from hours of prayer, conversation, reflection, and a very unique assignment. To identify with and advocate for a particular group of people because the Triune God loves them and desires relationship with them is simply to join in the mission of God in the world. To identify with a group of people commonly viewed as not only sinners but potentially as enemies of the church by many Christians, adds a layer of complexity. And to advocate on behalf of a group of people whose common connecting reality is a point of much disagreement and a divisive topic in the church, adds not only complexity but controversy.

Homosexuality is not only the proverbial hot potato, it is also one of the lightning rod litmus tests for the church today. The way we engage our gay neighbours is one of the most important contemporary opportunities for followers of Jesus to model and live out the good news of the gospel of Christ. That doesn't mean it will be easy, simple, or comfortable. But it does mean that being intentional in this area of engagement will have a significant impact on our understanding of the gospel, the grace of God, and the manner in which he calls us to represent him in our world.

As you watch the interviews contained on the DVD segments you will encounter thoughtful Christians who have lived in the tensions that the realities of homosexuality can create. Their love for Christ, love for gay people, and love for the church will inspire you. As you engage the Bible study and discussion questions, you will encounter God's call to share his love with your gay neighbours and may experience the growth that such a call entails.



## Segment 1:

### Gay People Are Our Neighbours

For many Christians, the topic of homosexuality continues to be a controversial yet largely theoretical issue. Many do not have any close personal relationships with gay people and their perspectives and attitudes have been influenced by diverse but impersonal experiences.

Sonia, David, Justin and Brian have all experienced the challenges of growing up in the Christian community with the reality of personally experiencing same-gender attraction. This is not theoretical for them.

Greg has been a pastor in a parish that includes many gay and lesbian people. This is not theoretical for him.

In the ministry of Jesus we see him touch the untouchables, befriend those on the margins and fringe, and associate with those the religious leaders did not associate with. Jesus himself said, *"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'"* (Luke 7: 34)

The stories on the DVD segment, "Gay People are Our Neighbours" offer the opportunity to hear the voices of those for whom realities of diverse sexual identity is a personal and real experience.

*Reflection Questions within the screening:*

1. *Welcoming Gay Neighbours:*
  - a. Would gay people be welcome in your church?
  - b. How has the church tried to listen to and understand the realities of gay people?
  - c. How can we address the prevalence of fear on this topic?
2. *Personal and Relational Engagement:*
  - a. What needs to be the primary attitude of Christ-followers toward gay people?
  - b. What is the primary barrier to adopting this attitude?
3. *Non-patronizing Pastoral Care:*
  - a. How comfortable do you feel relating to someone who is questioning matters of faith and sexuality?
  - b. What steps might you need to take to feel more prepared?

## Segment 1: *continued*

### Gay People Are Our Neighbours

BIBLICAL ENGAGEMENT: Read James 1: 26 – 27

*Anyone who sets himself up as "religious" by talking a good game is self-deceived. This kind of religion is hot air and only hot air. Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.*

#### *Content:*

- An overused cliché in the Christian community is, "Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin" as a catch-all response to gay people. In what ways might this fall into the "talking a good game" that James references? Have Christians deceived themselves with this easy, dismissive cliché?
- We say that Christians need to "walk the talk". What other stories from Scripture embody this concept of moving from talking about how to reach and touch the lives of others to actually being relationally engaged with our neighbours?

#### *Application:*

- Describe how you have experienced becoming aware of ways in which you'd been self-deceived – thinking that "talking a good game" was fulfilling God's call?
- What is most challenging about moving from *thinking theoretically* about reaching out and taking up the plight of those who are alienated and *actually doing it*?

#### *Optional Activity 1*

1. Can you recall conversations you have had with gay people?
2. What were some good things that came out of these interactions?
3. What may have been some challenges you faced in these interactions?
4. Did you feel free to speak about matters of faith? Why or why not?

#### *Optional Activity 2*

Watch the bonus interviews of "Gay People are Our Neighbours" DVD.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What insights were most applicable for you as you seek to grow in this area of engagement?
2. What comments are you uncertain of or would wish to challenge?
3. What specific application for your church do you take away from this segment?

## Segment 2:

### The Journey of Loving Same-Gender Attracted People

David, Ron, Justin and Brian's journeys with same-gender attraction have been deeply spiritual ones. Faced with the reality of his same-gender attraction and his faith journey, David asked key spiritual questions about God, "Who is God? Does God love me?" and himself, "Who am I? Can I be loved?" In their journeys, these men are discovering a spacious place that is both free of legalistic striving and invites a robust, costly discipleship.

Such journeys are not traveled in isolation. They are journeys that are impacted and affected by the attitudes, responses and beliefs of others. Our panel shares about the need for safe people and to address issues of fear. Greg reminds us of the need to earn the right to be heard by demonstrating a willingness to serve and be in relationship for the long haul.

#### *Reflection Questions within the screening:*

1. *Aha! Moments:*
  - a. What were the key spiritual questions David asked?
  - b. What did Ron learn about friendship and intimacy?
  - c. Can you relate to Brian's turning point?
2. *Homophobia Exists:*
  - a. How have you encountered dismissive and hurtful attitudes toward gay people within the Christian community?
  - b. How can your church community be more proactive in addressing the homophobia?
3. *Love & Service:*
  - a. How can we identify with those who feel excluded?
  - b. What draws a gay person to a church?
  - c. Brian McLaren says, "I haven't found a way to love people that isn't painful." How have you found this to be true?

#### BIBLICAL ENGAGEMENT:

John 13: 34, 35

*Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other.*

## Segment 2: *continued*

### The Journey of Loving Same-Gender Attracted People

Ephesians 4: 2, 3

*Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.*

Romans 13: 8, 9

*Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

1 Peter 3: 8, 9

*Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.*

#### *Content:*

1. Describe the kind of love Christians are called to in these passages. How do these attributes affect how we relate to same-gender attracted people within the Christian community?
2. In what ways is this kind of love costly? What does it ask of us?
3. What does it mean that other commandments are summed up in "Love your neighbor as yourself"?
4. Do you think we have been recognized as disciples of Christ by how we have loved gay people within the church? In what ways has the Christian witness been impacted by the church's treatment of gay people?

#### *Intersect with DVD:*

1. Describe the common perceptions Christians have of the faith journey of a same-gender attracted person. Did anything in the DVD challenge these common perceptions? If so, what?
2. What are some of the attitudes that you have encountered among Christians that would lead to a gay person not feeling safe? How can you address that?
3. What do you think is the most important priority for a same-gender attracted person seeking to follow Christ?

## Segment 2: *continued*

### The Journey of Loving Same-Gender Attracted People

#### *Application:*

1. Have your attitudes toward gay people changed in the last ten years? If so, describe what has changed and why?
2. What are, if any, the risks in loving and serving gay people?
3. What risks would you take to love and serve your gay neighbors?
4. In what ways can Christians stand up for justice for gay people and still stay true to their convictions?
5. Where do you think the church will be in ten years in relation to gay people? What is good about that? What makes you nervous about that?
6. Who is someone in your community who is a safe person for gay people?
7. What is one small step your church can take to influence people's attitudes toward gay people?

#### *Optional Activity 1*

Watch the bonus interviews of "The Journey of Loving Same-Gender Attracted People" DVD.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What stereotypes of gay people continue to impact how Christians think through the issue of homosexuality?
2. Are there same-gender attracted people in your church? Do they feel safe to disclose this reality trusting that they will be welcomed and cared for? (Note: If your church has more than 50 people there will be those who deal with the reality of some degree of same-gender attraction.)

## Segment 3:

### Loving Each Other through Difference and Disagreement

There is a great deal of diversity of opinion and perspective on homosexuality in the church today. This has caused painful division. It creates rifts in families and friendships. It breaks down trust and unity within the Body of Christ. And it affects the public witness to the culture at large.

How can we move forward as a church with such brokenness?

The contributors in this segment of the Bridging the Gap DVD share valuable insight from years of pastoral ministry, close personal friendships, willingness to be humbled, and demonstrated love for those with whom they disagree. Their stories and experiences speak a word of hope to a divided church for moving forward with wisdom and grace to honour Christ's prayer in John 17: 20-21, *"I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent Me."*

Matt 5: 43 – 48 (the Message)

*You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.*

*In a word, what I'm saying is, "Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."*

Have you heard Christians arguing about homosexuality? Have you read through some of the discussions on blogs that tackle the question of faith and homosexuality? Were you surprised by the kind of name-calling, angry, and arrogant reactions that the topic of homosexuality incurs? This topic offers an opportunity to grow in learning how to navigate relationships with those who disagree with us.

## Segment 3: *continued*

### Loving Each Other through Difference and Disagreement

Justin and Ron are two same-gender attracted men who come to different conclusions about Scripture's teaching on monogamous same-gender sexual relationships. They are also good friends who clearly respect and care for one another. Bruxy and Greg pastor churches that gather people who hold diverse perspectives on sexual ethics. Tony Campolo regularly speaks on the topic of homosexuality with his wife Peggy who holds a more liberal perspective than Tony does. With such a significant point of disagreement, how do these followers of Jesus seek to model His love and grace through difference?

*“The discovery of our common humanity, beneath our differences, seems for many to be dangerous. It not only means that we have to lose some of our power, privilege, and self-image, but also that we have to look at the shadow side in ourselves, the brokenness, and even the evil in our own hearts and culture; it implies moving into a certain insecurity.”* Jean Vanier

#### *Reflection Questions within the screening:*

1. *Humility, Honesty & Acceptance:*
  - a. Why is it important to nurture relationship with those we disagree with?
  - b. How can we express humility in conversations about homosexuality?
  - c. How can differentiating between acceptance and agreement help us?
2. *Friendship & Disagreement*
  - a. How can we honour a fellow Christian with whom we disagree?
  - b. How do we commonly dismiss those who think and believe differently than we do?
  - c. How can we move from being a Pharisee to being more like Christ when relating to gay people?
3. *The Transcendent Love of Christ*
  - a. How can we overcome the negative perceptions of Christians commonly held by those outside the church?
  - b. What impact does this issue have on young people in the church?
  - c. What should our focus be in the midst of conversations about homosexuality?

## Segment 3: *continued*

### Loving Each Other through Difference and Disagreement

Matt 5: 43 – 48 (the Message)

*You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves. This is what God does. He gives his best—the sun to warm and the rain to nourish—to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty. If all you do is love the lovable, do you expect a bonus? Anybody can do that. If you simply say hello to those who greet you, do you expect a medal? Any run-of-the-mill sinner does that.*

*In a word, what I'm saying is, "Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you."*

*Content:*

1. What can be an outcome of loving your enemies?
2. How should we respond when someone who disagrees with us speaks against us?
3. What does Jesus equate maturity with in this passage?
4. What gets in the way of us living generously and graciously toward others?

*Intersect with DVD:*

1. Do you have any friends who differ from you in your understanding of Scripture's teaching about sexuality? If so, what have you learned from being in that friendship?
2. Disagreement about homosexuality can elicit very strong reactions. Why do you think this is the case?
3. Greg reminds us that, "Nobody needs God's grace more than I do". Do you think that this is a reality that Christians live out? What would change if they did?

*Application:*

1. Do a person's beliefs about homosexuality affect their salvation?
2. What impact does division over homosexuality have on the church?
3. What impact does the division between Christians about homosexuality have on our witness to those outside of the church?

## Segment 3: *continued*

### Loving Each Other through Difference and Disagreement

#### *Optional Activity 1*

Consider the following statements:

- "Jesus never said anything about homosexuality."
- "In Christ, we are a new creation. So a gay person who turns to Christ will be given a new identity and the power to submit their sexual desires to Christ's Lordship."
- "The first thing that was not good in creation (even before sin entered the picture) was that man was alone. Surely it is not God's intention for all same-gender attracted people to live alone."
- "God's grace is sufficient for us and in our weakness He is strong. Same-gender attracted people will discover this grace as they trust God with their needs."
- "Paul said, *"It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion."* (1 Cor. 7:9) This should apply to same-gender attracted people too. It is better for them to be in monogamous partnerships than to fall into uncommitted sexual encounters."
- "The Bible is clear. None of the Scriptural references that mention homosexual behaviour are affirming of the behaviour."

How you would engage someone who made one of these statements in conversation. How could you build bridges in such a conversation if you disagreed with the statement? How does it make you feel to encounter statements you disagree with?

#### *Optional Activity 2*

Watch the bonus interview with Brian McLaren on "Loving Each Other Through Difference and Disagreement". Discuss the following questions:

1. McLaren draws some parallels to dealing with racism in the church in the past and the contemporary issue of homosexuality. What is helpful about that comparison? Where does the comparison break down?
2. McLaren refers to Romans 14 where Paul gives instruction on disputable matters. Verse 12, 13: "So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way." Do you think this passage applies to the issue of homosexuality? Why or why not?

#### *Optional Activity 3*

Consider a conversation you've had with when there was disagreement.

- How did the conversation go?
- How did the conversation make you feel? Peace? Frustration? Anger?
- Did you feel you were able to be the presence of Christ in the conversation?

# Segment 4:

## Creating a Safe Place in the Christian Community

In 2007, the Barna group published "unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity...and Why It Matters", and found that 91% of 16 – 29 year olds perceive Christians to be "anti-gay". With this research, we see the stark reality of how unwelcoming the church appears to be when it comes to our gay neighbors.

In the ministry of Jesus we see him touch the untouchables, befriend those on the margins and fringe, and associate with those the religious leaders did not associate with. Jesus himself said, "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners.'" (Luke 7: 34)

The interviews on the DVD segment, "Creating a Safe Place in the Christian Community" share insights that point the way forward for a healthy church that welcomes and enfolds those who seek to journey with Christ in the midst of personal realities of sexuality. They impart hope for a community that reflects the lavish love of God. The church, that is the gathering of God's people, is to be a safe place for **anyone** to engage the presence of God.

Acts 10: 34-36 the Message

*"God plays no favorites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open."*

*Reflection Questions within the screening:*

1. *Vulnerability & Authenticity:*
  - a. How can the church become a safe place to be real?
  - b. How can we build trust and share more vulnerably in the church?
  - c. How can we break down an "us & them" dichotomy?
2. *Relating Graciously*
  - a. How do we encourage maturity and grace in the church?
  - b. In what ways can the freedom to accept others be threatening to Christians?
3. *Relating Graciously*
  - a. How can the church be a place of connection for the lonely?
  - b. What assumptions about gay people need to be challenged in the church?
  - c. What would change in the church if Christians built friendships with their gay neighbours?

## Segment 4: *continued*

### Creating a Safe Place in the Christian Community

#### BIBLICAL ENGAGEMENT:

I Corinthians 6: 9-11: *“Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”*

Consider what kind of church the church of Corinth must have been to have welcomed those who were sexually immoral, thieves, drunkards, slanderers and swindlers into their midst. The text doesn't indicate to us what kind of process this “washing and sanctifying and justifying” was. But it is unlikely that every single sexually immoral person, every thief, every slanderer and swindler who walked through the doors was instantly and permanently changed. God designed healing and growth to occur in community through the power and presence of the Spirit within us both individually and corporately. Therefore, at any given time, the church in Corinth was welcoming and relating to some pretty messed up people who were in the process of encountering the presence of Jesus and being washed, sanctified and justified by him.

#### *Content:*

1. The church community in Corinth was part of the fabric of their neighborhoods. It attracted those with diverse sexual preferences and practices and involved them in their community. What do you think being part of the community was like?
2. What other New Testament examples demonstrate that the early church attracted and welcomed diverse people, people who weren't accepted by Jewish religious leaders?
3. Describe how you have experienced being “washed, sanctified and justified” in the name of Jesus by the Spirit? Did it happen all at once? Is it still happening?
4. What is the most challenging aspect of imitating the kind of risk-taking, engaging community of the Corinthian church? What are some of the cautions we see in Paul's ongoing engagement with the Corinthian church?

## Segment 4: *continued*

### Creating a Safe Place in the Christian Community

#### *Connect with DVD:*

1. Would you feel comfortable navigating conversation with someone who is questioning matters of faith and sexuality? What steps might you need to take to feel more prepared?
2. Would a gay person find a safe place to discuss and dialogue matters of sexuality and faith in your small group / church community?
3. BTG profiles 6 different people who whom same-gender attraction has been part of their reality – Brian, David, Sonia, Johanna, Ron and Justin. As you've heard them share stories and insights, what are some of the ways you think they have experienced being "washed, sanctified and justified"?

#### *Application:*

1. Why should the church be a safe place for same-gender attracted people?
2. What are some of the risks / challenges of being a safe and welcoming place for our gay neighbors?
3. Engaging with those who challenge us in our beliefs can be threatening and tiring. What can be redemptive about being willing to go to that place in relationship?
4. What are some of the potential rewards a community can experience as they engage gay people?
5. As you look at your own lives, what potential is there to be more intentional with your gay neighbors? What is a first step you can take to discern how God would want you to engage?

#### *Optional Activity 1*

Think about conversations you have had where there was a sense of vulnerability and transparency.

- Were these conversations a positive experience?
- Did the conversations cause you to feel listened to? Judged? Understood? Supported?

## Contributor Bio's:

**Sonia Balcer** has integrated her experience of same-gender attraction and faith in a commitment to live a chaste single life. She leads a small supportive community for same-gender attracted Christians called "Safe Passage."

**Ron Belgau** is a celibate gay Christian. Ron is completing his ph.d work in philosophy, and writes and speaks regularly on the topic of homosexuality. You can find Ron on the web at: [www.cityofgod.net](http://www.cityofgod.net)

**Tony Campolo** is an internationally known author and speaker. Tony has been an outspoken advocate for gay and lesbian people for more than 20 years. His book, "Speaking My Mind" offers more of his thoughts on homosexuality.

**Bruxy Cavey** is the teaching pastor at a large, multi-site church in the Toronto area. Bruxy has also written the book, "The End of Religion: An Introduction to the Subversive Spirituality of Jesus." You can download Bruxy's sermons at: <http://www.themeetinghouse.ca>

**David Colpitts** is a celibate gay Christian. David is completing ph.d work in counseling, and has served in ministry with same-gender attracted people for many years. You can read more of David's story at: <http://www.reconnecting.ca/content.xjp?id=356>

**Johanna Finnegan** was an atheist and identified as a lesbian. She came to Christ, in part, through building a friendship with Sonia Balcer. Johanna, much to her surprise, is now married and at the time of the filming, she and her husband were expecting their first child.

**Wendy Gritter** is the Executive Director of New Direction Ministries. Wendy blogs at: [www.btgproject.blogspot.com](http://www.btgproject.blogspot.com) and is working on her first book.

**Baxter Kruger** is the Director of Perichoresis, an international ministry sharing the good news of our adoption in Christ. We recommend his book, "Across All Worlds: Jesus Inside Our Darkness." His ongoing thoughts can be found on his blog: <http://baxterkruger.blogspot.com>

**Justin Lee** is a gay Christian. He serves as the Executive Director of the Gay Christian Network which runs an online community for gay Christians of diverse theological perspectives. Justin writes and speaks extensively on the topic of homosexuality. [www.gaychristian.net](http://www.gaychristian.net)

**Brian McLaren** is an internationally known author and speaker. He has been both criticized and applauded for his thoughts on the church moving forward and navigating this topic of homosexuality. Brian can be found online at: [www.brianmclaren.net](http://www.brianmclaren.net)

**Greg Paul** is the founder of Sanctuary Ministries and author of, "God in the Alley." You can learn more about Greg's ministry at: [www.sanctuarytoronto.ca](http://www.sanctuarytoronto.ca)

**Brian Pengelly** is a "gay youth pastor married to a bisexual woman" and serves as Youth Specialist at New Direction Ministries. Brian breaks stereotypes with his willingness to be personally vulnerable through sharing his story, teaching youth, and equipping youth leaders. He can be contacted through: [www.newdirection.ca](http://www.newdirection.ca)

## Frequently Asked Questions:

*Q: Why do you sometimes use the word gay and other times the phrase same-gender attracted?*

R: Some people do not want to identify as gay but prefer to use the descriptive phrase, same-gender attracted. So we use this phrase to be inclusive. When we do use the word gay, we are simply referring to a person who experiences same-gender attraction but are not making any statement about whether they are or are not engaged in same-gender sexual behaviour.

*Q: Why is there so much art in the DVD and who are the artists?*

R: We have always felt that art can communicate a message that goes beyond words. The creation of art is a mysterious and powerful process out of which emerges beauty. The work of bridge building is more an art than a science. Some will see the beauty in it, gratefully appreciate it, and aspire to be part of it in their own context. The artists featured in the DVD can be contacted through their sites:

- Tina Newlove, painter: [www.tinanewlove.com](http://www.tinanewlove.com)
- Elizabeth Henstock, sculpter: [www.burntofferings.ca](http://www.burntofferings.ca)
- Cynthia Stevens, potter: [www.burntofferings.ca](http://www.burntofferings.ca)

## Frequently Asked Questions: *continued*

*Q: What do gay people think of this DVD?*

*R:* We are really grateful to our gay contacts who have helped us in developing and reviewing this resource. Some identify as Christian and others do not. Their input and support has been invaluable to us. This is no guarantee that every gay person will appreciate this resource, however we have intentionally included gay people in the development process.

*Q: Why didn't you talk more about what the Bible says about homosexuality?*

*R:* In the past 30 plus years, many books, articles, and resources have been developed addressing theological issues surrounding homosexuality. Often this results in very polarized discussion with a focus on the rightness or wrongness of one side or another. What can get lost in such discussion is the real lives of gay people who are trying to navigate journeys of faith. Bridging the Gap intentionally focused on real life realities of our gay neighbours rather than theological positions.

*Q: The DVD seems to be saying that there is no healing for gay people but I've heard stories of people who were gay and aren't anymore. Why didn't you include those stories in this DVD?*

*R:* When people ask about healing, what they are often wondering about is the question of reorientation. The question of reorientation is extremely contentious and may be offensive to gay people. The discussion about reorientation is often a great distraction from what we believe to be the more fruitful conversation about discipleship—growing in our relationship with Christ. The most recent research suggests that some people may experience some fluidity in their sexuality, but that complete orientation change is extremely rare and difficult to demonstrate. We have found that an undue focus on orientation change can be harmful to a same-gender attracted person in their journey.

*Q: Why aren't there interviews with non-Christian gay people?*

*R:* This particular resource focuses on the Christian community. We would like to hear more from non-Christian gay people in future resources.

## Related Links & Contact Info:

The following links and resources are offered for your exploration and represent diverse perspectives on homosexuality. The opinions and views expressed on the sites below are not necessarily endorsed by New Direction Ministries.

### Bridging Resources:

[www.btgproject.blogspot.com](http://www.btgproject.blogspot.com)—New Direction's blog  
[www.bridges-across.org](http://www.bridges-across.org)  
[www.freetobeme.com](http://www.freetobeme.com)  
[www.gaychristian.net](http://www.gaychristian.net)  
[www.love-is-an-orientation.blogspot.com](http://www.love-is-an-orientation.blogspot.com)  
[www.startingdialogue.blogspot.com](http://www.startingdialogue.blogspot.com)  
[www.twoworldcollision.blogspot.com](http://www.twoworldcollision.blogspot.com)

### Conservative Perspective:

[www.wthrockmorton.com](http://www.wthrockmorton.com)  
[www.sexualidentityinstitute.org](http://www.sexualidentityinstitute.org)  
[www.moremusingson.blogspot.com](http://www.moremusingson.blogspot.com)  
[www.exodus.to](http://www.exodus.to)  
[www.reconnecting.ca](http://www.reconnecting.ca)  
[www.pursuegod.wordpress.com](http://www.pursuegod.wordpress.com)  
[www.disputedmutability.wordpress.com](http://www.disputedmutability.wordpress.com)

### Gay Affirming Perspective:

[www.aaiiieeee.blogspot.com](http://www.aaiiieeee.blogspot.com)  
[www.beyondexgay.com](http://www.beyondexgay.com)  
[www.sisterfriends-together.org](http://www.sisterfriends-together.org)  
[www.myheartgoesout-carol.blogspot.com](http://www.myheartgoesout-carol.blogspot.com)  
[www.ecwr.org](http://www.ecwr.org)  
[www.queermergent.wordpress.com](http://www.queermergent.wordpress.com)

To contact the producers of Bridging the Gap, to book Wendy Gritter or Brian Pengelly for speaking engagements, or to inquire about additional resources:

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[www.newdirection.ca](http://www.newdirection.ca)  
[info@newdirection.ca](mailto:info@newdirection.ca)  
905-813-1245



## Related Resources:

The following links and resources are offered for your exploration and represent diverse perspectives on homosexuality. The opinions and views expressed are not necessarily endorsed by New Direction Ministries.

Books: all available on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- Adventures in Missing the Point—Brian McLaren & Tony Campolo c. 2006
- Love is an Orientation: Elevating the Conversation With the Gay Community— Andrew Marin c. 2009
- No Perfect People Allowed: Creating a Come-As-You-Are Culture in the Church—John Burke c. 2007
- Peppermint Filled Pinatas: Breaking Through Tolerance and Embracing Love—Eric Michael Bryant c. 2007
- Reasoning Together: A Conversation on Homosexuality—T. Grimsrud & M. Nation c. 2008
- unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity... and Why it Matters—D. Kinnamon, G. Lyons c. 2007
- Tortured Wonders: Christian Spirituality for People Not Angels—Rodney Clapp c. 2004

DVD's:

- "Bringing Christian Love Out of the Closet" [www.lovinghomosexuals.com](http://www.lovinghomosexuals.com)
- "For the Bible Tells Me So" [www.firstrunfeatures.com](http://www.firstrunfeatures.com)
- "God and Gays: Bridging the Gap" [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)
- "Save Me" [www.firstrunfeatures.com](http://www.firstrunfeatures.com)
- "Through My Eyes" [www.gaychristian.net](http://www.gaychristian.net)