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)

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_FccR1Zjyfyvcb

2. Oh, Leviticus:
https://youtu.be/Wda3RsWN2qA?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyfyvcb

3. The Bible Says:
https://youtu.be/AH2jcMtNDsw?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyfyvcb

4. Why Do We Stay:
https://youtu.be/gvcNTZpb7ag?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyfyvcb

5. Care for Yourself:
https://youtu.be/Bm4a8xIW2R4?list=PLnejCNM_X8hdYx_iI2_FccR1Zjyfyvcb


Unclobbering Texts Videos by Colby Martin

Genesis 19: https://youtu.be/69O61SOlM0E
Leviticus: https://youtu.be/yEiu6zKmkA
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

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

Websites

Dr. Wil Gafney, Hebrew Bible Scholar: www.wilgafney.com
  “Interpreting the Bible in a Nonbiblical Word”

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


Books and Articles


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


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.

**Rev. Kendal Brown, Associate for Church Development and Congregational Vitality**
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 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_JIDjkE%7E%2CZZV_Jw5j6Ec5yfBfRZRfb5ooopcRkbCf&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
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.”