

## Quotes/verses

*"I realized through my new life in Christ's blood that the root of my lesbianism was the sin of pride—the pride that declared that my body would not be a commodity under male headship or patriarchy. Pride fueled sexual desires in me that exempted itself from men and directed itself to women. But the Word of God testified against my pride and the sexual desire that it ignited. I could not stand under the weight of its honor. After a radical conversion and the radical repentance it exacted, and after the wreckage of this, my lesbianism seemed like a case of mistaken identity, not an accurate self-representation." (Rosaria Butterfield, *Openness Unhindered*, 145)*

*"I'll tell you how I cried and prayed and begged God to make me straight, or else to make me believe that the Bible left room for monogamous same-sex relationships. I'll tell you how God kept refusing to do either one, how he kept pointing me back to the cross of Christ. How I followed my Savior in costly obedience and became a mythical creature, a thing that wasn't supposed to exist: a single gay Christian." (Gregory Coles, *Single, Gay, Christian*, 5)*

*"For as long as I could remember, I had been drawn, even as a child, to other males in some vaguely confusing way, and after puberty I had come to realize that I had a steady, strong, unremitting, exclusive sexual attraction to persons of the same sex. Since that time of self-discovery, I have struggled week in and week out to know how to live faithfully as a Christian who experiences same-sex attractions....But I have never found a book I could resonate with that tries to put into words some of the confusion and sorrow and triumph and grief and joy of the struggle to live faithfully before God, in Christ, with others, as a gay person." (Wesley Hill, *Washed and Waiting*, 22)*

*"...in the phrase 'gay Christian,' the noun Christian is changed by using a word whose sexual expression affirms behavior that stands apart from God's commands. In this way, it is different from a linguistic place keeper that identifies cultural affiliations (like Italian American, for examples). 'Gay Christian' differs from Italian American because God does not condemn national origin as a sin, but he has much to say about sex apart from the covenant of marriage, personal identity apart from Christ's exclusive claim, and self-representation that hijacks the appearance of sinful behavior and calls it grace.... No, gay is not just another adjective. It is a term of identity. Gay describes an intimate disclosure of real and abiding selfhood....Words matter. Self-representation matters....And the term 'gay Christian' has great potential to mislead people, even as those who use it are seeking clarity, honesty, and transparency." (Butterfield, *OU*, 116-118)*

*"The conservative Christian world is one of the only places where gay still means primarily an identity associated with a sociopolitical community. The problem that develops when Christians use privatized language to define terms in contradiction to common lexical use is the risk of appearing as liars. We know what we mean by our terms, but non-Christians don't. So when we say 'I am not gay' but in truth we still have same-sex attraction, we come across as frauds. We defame the cause of Christ by the appearance of deception." (Rebecca, quoted in *Openness Unhindered*, 143-144)*

*"I would never want any other identity to alter my identity in Christ. Being gay shouldn't make me into a fundamentally different kind of Christian. But being a Christian also shouldn't mean that I forget every other part of my experience of the world.... I'm not saying that avoiding labels is always bad. I don't want to wear the word gay like a forehead tattoo and attach it to everything I do. I don't want to be 'the gay grad student' or 'the gay worship leader.... We're more than our sexuality. But there are*

*times I need a word to name my sexuality, and I need a different word to name yours. Without those words, we're glossing over the details that make our stories and challenges unique. When a straight Christian says to a celibate gay Christian, 'Forget labels—we all have to resist sexual temptation,' it feels a bit like a person on a diet telling a diabetic, 'I know what it's like to avoid sugar.'* (Coles, 69-70)

*"Like many younger people who are Christian and gay, I have shied away from much of what flies under the banner of Exodus and its affiliates. I was never involved in an Exodus group of any sort, in part because so many of their public statements led me to believe they were addressing themselves to people with rather different histories than mine. When I heard ex-gay accounts of the origins of same-sex attraction—accounts that focused on absentee or distant fathers or failure to bond with same-sex peers in childhood—I realized I was hearing stories that were pretty removed from my experience. I was raised in a very loving two-parent family, and the "father wound" narrative never illumined the possible causes of my homosexuality as it seemed to do for others. And I discerned, however inchoately, however rightly or wrongly, that if I were to join up with an "ex-gay" ministry, I would feel some degree of pressure to conform my narrative to theirs."* (Wesley Hill,

<https://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2013/06/after-exodus-what> )

*"So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."* (1 Cor. 12:7-10)

*"God it seemed, had never quite agreed with Paul on what counted as 'weakness.' While Paul was begging for healing, God was celebrating an opportunity to show off his strength.... And if that was true, I realized, perhaps it wasn't wrong for me to struggle either. Perhaps it wasn't wrong to face a challenge I could never seem to defeat. Whether or not God had designed me this way, he was fully within his rights when he allowed me a predisposition to things I could never have, fully within his rights when he refused to 'fix' me.... Being gay didn't mean God had rejected me. Maybe it was just a thorn in my flesh, an invitation to frailty, a unique kind of weakness. And maybe that weakness was also a unique kind of strength, a unique invitation to delight."* (Coles, 42-43)

*"...although Christian discipleship is costly, it need not be lonely. Our culture has become very fixated on sex, but sex and romance are not the same as love. Nor is Christian love the same as the kind of casual friendship that is common in our culture...contrary to the transitory nature of so many contemporary friendships, a friend in Christ "loves always"... obedience to Christ offered more to me than just the denial of sex and romance. Christ-centered chaste friendships offered a positive and fulfilling—albeit at times challenging—path to holiness."* (<https://spiritualfriendship.org/2012/08/29/spiritual-friendship-in-300-words/>)