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Conversion or Reparative Therapy

Created Gay takes the position that conversion or reparative counselling therapy aimed at changing people's sexual orientation from gay or from bisexual to heterosexual should not be promoted nor used by Christians, because conversion therapy could be a questionable psychotherapeutic approach and is not in harmony with a Christian world view and with the Bible.

Our concerns relating to conversion therapy are briefly summarized below:

- Bisexuality and homosexuality are sexual orientations, not diseases. Gay and bisexual people are productive, well-adjusted members of society. Treating healthy people does not make sense.
- Conversion therapy may cause gay and bisexual individuals and communities to feel demeaned and less valued.
- Reparative therapy creates a hierarchy of sexualities, with heterosexuality being seen as the best sexual orientation.
- Attempts to change people into heterosexuals does not treat gay and bisexual people like God carriers.
- The Bible does not have any examples of Jesus or the apostles healing gay men, lesbians or bisexuals.
- The Bible does not teach that loving same-gender sexual relationships are a sin.
- Conversion therapies do not adequately recognize that sex and sexuality are gifts from God.

The Tent of God

by Gary Simpson

Genesis 25:1-14 (KJV) Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them. The length of one curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure. The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and other five curtains shall be coupled one to another. And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of another curtain, in the coupling of the second. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be one tabernacle.

7And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make. The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains shall be all of one measure. And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle. And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second.

11And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one. And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the backside of the tabernacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this side and on that side, to cover it.

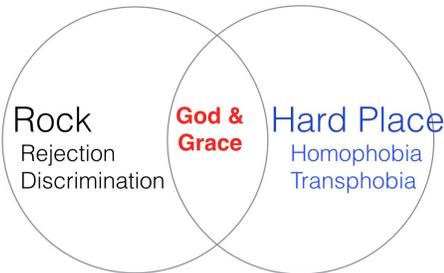
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Where is God?

Part of the lived experience of gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, queer and Trans people is finding God and grace in the most unexpected places, at the intersections of

- A rock and a hard place.
- Hate and xenophobia.
- Discrimination and fear.
- Rejection and misinformation.
- Oppression and stigma.



- Opposition from powerful political and religious voices.

Think for a moment.

When did you find God and grace present in spite of the challenges of life?

God and God's grace are always present.

Ephesians 1:4

**God chose us
before the
foundation of
the world.**

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And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.

My initial reaction to this text was not one of awe. The text did not really blow off my socks. The passage sounds like instructions to tradesmen, to tentmakers and to seamstresses. While I respect and envy those in the trades, those who are really good with their hands, I do not enjoy that kind of work and have little interest in building things. I would much rather curl up in a corner and read scientific periodicals or theological commentaries.

But when one looks closer at the text, one finds that the Lord was revealing a lot about God in the way the Sacred Tent was to be built. From the blueprint for the tradesmen, we are able to catch a few insights into the things of God. In the very construction of the Sacred Tent, God was subtly teaching people about a God of love, a God who will pay the ultimate sacrifice for sin for humanity. The subtle teachings ended at Calvary. Then it was clear for all to see.

All of the messages are from a set of instructions. Perhaps, that means all people should read instructions. I am not sure about that. As a person who rarely wants to read the instructions, I am going to try to ignore that.

From the curtains, the tent coverings, we are able to learn about God, about being in Christ and about the Christian walk of faith.

There were four curtains in the Tent.¹ The linen curtain was the inside curtain and you had to be inside the Tent Tabernacle to see it. The linen curtain represents the beauty of Christ, a beauty that cannot be seen by the world, a beauty Believers can see.² According to the description, the linen curtain never touched the ground. A case can be made that the full beauty of God will only be seen in the heavenly.

The goat's hair curtain touched the ground and is symbolic of Christ's death.³ Just as the curtain touched the ground, Jesus touched the ground, touched the ordinary. Jesus' life and ministry touched people in the workplaces, in the markets, in the ordinary places of life.

¹ J. Vernon McGee. *Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee*. Vol. 1. (Pasadena, California: Thru the Bible Radio, 1981), 284.

² McGee, 285.

³ McGee, 285.

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Christian Haunted House

A news report by by Dan Aver on NewNowNext (<http://www.newnownext.com/halloween-pulse-nightclub/10/2016/>) reports that there was a Christian haunted house which seems to have had "A Journey to Hell" theme and that, among other things, had a depiction of the Pulse gay bar massacre, where 49 people were murdered in what is widely considered to be a hate crime.

The news report is a source of concern for a number of reasons. The mass murder of 49 people is not a trivial event that should be a source of entertainment at a Halloween event. To gender and sexual minority people and their allies, the Orlando hate crime is traumatic. Just as it is highly insensitive to trivialize the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and to use the attack as a source of entertainment, it is highly insensitive and inappropriate to entertain people with depictions of the Orlando gay club murders.

The theology behind the "Journey to Hell" is problematic and faulty. God does not damn people to hell, because they are not cisgender, heterosexuals. God the Son, Jesus Christ gave His life for humanity. It is seriously out of character for a God who lays down His life for humanity to reject people who are gay, bisexual, asexual, queer or Trans. The Bible passages that mention same-gender sexual activities are quite obviously not about loving same-sex relationships.

Created Gay requests those who organized the program to apologize to the LGBT community and to never again trivialize hate crimes, murder and death of any individuals and any groups of people.

Ram skins are a sacrifice.⁴ This is fairly obvious, because the ram has to give his life to provide the skins. The ram skins are dyed red, the color of blood. The ram skins are a symbol of the strength and the power of Calvary.⁵

The outer layer was of badger's skin. Your Bible might translate this as "fine leather."⁶ Badger skin had no real beauty.⁷ When people looked at the outside of the Tent Tabernacle, they saw a structure that had little beauty. The skin covering gives us a few insights. Like the badger skin, Jesus did not attract people because of His beauty.⁸

To put this in common language, Jesus was not hot. He would not have been voted Mr. Universe, the sexiest man in the Empire, Twink of Israel, Mr. Gay or Mr. Bisexual Roman Empire. Straight ladies and men who love men would not have been swooning for Jesus. Jesus was not the Rock Hudson, a Brad Pitt or a Tom Daley of His day. He would not have been in a boy band. In fact, the Bible gives us the impression that Jesus was a little homely. [Isaiah 53:2](#) [He wasn't some handsome king. Nothing about the way he looked made him attractive to us.](#) When we read the Bible, we understand why Jesus was born in Bethlehem, not in Beth Holly Wood, not in Beth Castro.

God took the form of an average person in the physical form of Jesus. God wanted us to follow Jesus, because of Jesus' teachings, Jesus' ministry and Calvary. God did not want us chasing after Jesus because of Jesus' beauty.

The Son of God may have been average looking, at best, and at worst, possibly ugly. God chose to reveal God through an average looking body, because God loves average looking bodies and average looking people. If God did not love average looking people, God would not have created so many average looking people. That can be a source of comfort to those of us who feel a profound sense of disappointment when we look in the mirror and when we compare ourselves with others. Perhaps, God is best revealed through average people, because average people better let people see past the human and see the divine.

⁴ James Smith. *Handfuls on Purpose*. Vol. 1. (Edinburgh: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.), 17.

⁵ McGee, 285.

⁶ The NRSV translates it "fine leather."

⁷ McGee, 285.

⁸ Smith, 18 and McGee, 285, cite Isaiah 53:2.

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Contradictory Theology: Pro-life and anti-LGBT

There is a tendency to understand being pro-life with being opposed to abortions and with being opposed to euthanasia. In reality, pro-life includes far more than being opposed to abortion and euthanasia. A person who is pro-life will want to protect and cherish all lives at all times between conception and death. A person is not truly pro-life rages against gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer or asexual individuals or lobbies against laws and school policies that protect sexual minority people. People who are pro-life can have consistently pro-life theology when they support:

- Gay Straight Alliances in schools, because GSAs are shown to reduce all forms of bullying and can help reduce suicidal feelings among students and can help improve overall mental health in schools.
- Support same-sex marriage, because good marriages can enhance life.
- Want LGBT people to be protected from hate crimes.
- Protect the right for LGBT people to hold a job, without fear of being fired because they are queer.

**Called to be a
rainbow for those
weathering the
storms of life.**

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From the curtains, we can gain insights into what it means to be Believers. And those insights are legit, because we are also a tent tabernacle, a portable tabernacle of God. [1 Corinthians 3:16](#). **Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**

Like Christ, we might be a bit homely on the outside. Our unattractiveness is not due to our poor physical appearance, but is due to our human nature. People look at our lives, they may see little that is appealing. We are not spiritual Brad Pitts. In fact, we are rather homely looking to the world. Those who know us see our warts, our failures and our problems. The eyes of people focus on the badgers skin outer layer of our human tabernacles.

Fortunately, that is not what God sees. The spirit of Jesus, our Savior, lives in us. That means God is looking at the inside of the tabernacle. God sees the beauty on the inside when God looks at you, God sees the linen, in blue, scarlet and purple. The ugly stuff, God does not see.

The blue in the linen curtain represents the sky, the heavenly and shows our hope for eternal life. Our spiritual lives hold to the hope in the heavenly and our behavior starts to reflect that hope, as the Lord continues to move in our lives.

The scarlet or red represents the color of the earth. The red shows that we are human, that our feet touch the ground. We are not so isolated and insulated from the problems of the world, the stresses of life, that people cannot relate to us. In fact, people see us struggling with the same family, school, work, community and health problems that everybody else faces. And somehow, through the badger skin, they manage to see the blue, the hope of a heavenly in how we respond to the life problems we face.

Red and blue are mixed to create purple.⁹ The mixing of the trials of humanity and the hope of the heavenly creates purple, one of the most regal and royal colors. When people see that God planted the heavenly in our lives, they see the wonderful color of royalty in us.

Goat's hair is white. This curtain shows the Believer's privilege.¹⁰ Because of Jesus' ministry, we are given His perfect and spotless life. Our sins are gone. The white goat's hair also represents how Christians intercede on behalf of others, just as Christ intercedes for humanity.

⁹ Smith, 16.

¹⁰ Smith, 17.

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St. Paul and Social Media Acts 17:1-15

Paul runs into such fierce opposition in the city of Thessalonica that he leaves the city. And Paul takes to the ancient form of social media, letter writing. He writes two letters, 1 and 2 Thessalonians. About two thousand years later, Paul's letters to the congregation in Thessalonica are still making a difference.

Since as early as the 1960s, brave sexual minority people have used social media to change society when it was too dangerous to be out. The social media they used included flyers, newsletters, magazines, books, internet websites, My Space, You Tube, Facebook, Tumblr and Twitter. Like St. Paul, these activists have helped transform the world. Years after being published, their websites, Twitter accounts and videos touch hearts. We can easily see their impact on You Tube. Tyler Oakley, with 8.1 million subscribers, Joey Graceffa, with 6.9 million subscribers and Connor Franta, with 5.6 million subscribers, show the world that LGBT people are credible people and that LGBT people deserve to live in homes and societies that are safe and that treat sexual minority people with respect and dignity.

Created Gay challenges queer people of faith to leave a lasting legacy on social media, by contributing articles, reflections and sermons to Created Gay or by making your own social media spaces that speak of a loving God who includes all people in the Kingdom of heaven.



The ram's skins represent sacrifice. You cannot have a ram's skin without a ram being sacrificed.¹¹ In our lives, the ram's skin represents the sacrifices God makes through us to reach people, to touch lives. Every time the Lord touches someone through you, the ram's skin is visible, the sacrifice of Calvary is evident.

The inside layers of the tent are splendid and those magnificent layers show the spectacular work of Creator God in God's fabulous rainbow people.

From Hebrew, we understand the word translated tent has another meaning. In Hebrew, the word tent shares the same root as the word shekinah.¹² The link from the tent tabernacle to shekinah makes sense to me. The tent tabernacle is where the children of Israel understood the glory of God was abiding. God is present in you. **2 Corinthians 6:16 For we are the temple of the living God!**¹³ You are a living tabernacle of God, a place where the presence and glory of God is made known to the world. You are the rainbow shekinah of God.

"All is grace, and
grace is for all."

James Moffatt

in Grace in the New Testament

¹¹ Smith, 17.

¹² Nahum M. Sarna. *The JPS Commentary: Exodus*. (Philadelphia: Jewish Pub. Society, 1991), 154.

¹³ 2 Corinthians 6:16, GNB.