

THE 5 STREAMS: DIFFERING RESPONSES TO LGBTQ



ABOUT RESTORY MINISTRIES

ReStory Ministries is a nonprofit organization equipping churches to address LGBTQ. We equip pastors, support families, and assist churches to become healing communities. When God's people are equipped, new stories of transformation are told!

ReStory Ministries is endorsed by the Assemblies of God (AG).



ABOUT LINDA A. SEILER, PHD

For decades, Linda felt like a man trapped in a female body and was exclusively attracted to women. Today, she is content in a female body and wholly attracted to men. Dr. Seiler offers a unique, compassionate perspective as one who has struggled with her own gender identity and sexuality.

Linda serves as the Executive Director of ReStory Ministries and as a National Chi Alpha Field Specialist in Applied Theology and Culture. She is an ordained AG minister and holds a PhD from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (2020), with her dissertation investigating 30 case studies of men and women who were once same-sex attracted and have experienced transformation.

Linda is a member of Connection Point Church (AG) in West Lafayette, IN.



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Presenter: Linda A. Seiler, PhD

➤ INTRODUCTION

- 1. Thirty years ago, 2 streams of thought**
 - a. Pro-God
 - b. Pro-gay
- 2. Today: multiple streams as culture has become more fractured**
 - a. Four categories: Side A, Side B, Side X, Side Y
 - b. Streams imply some overlap, similar to nature where streams do not remain in fixed lanes/categories
- 3. 5 streams (renaming the 4 categories with an addition of a 5th stream)**
 - a. Condemnation
 - b. Affirmation
 - c. Accommodation
 - d. Mortification
 - e. Transformation
- 4. Examining the 5 streams (see Teachable for a helpful summary chart)**
 - a. Theology
 - b. Origin (spirit, soul, body)
 - c. Pastoral care
 - d. Outcome for the overcomer
 - e. Strengths and weaknesses
 - f. Proponents

➤ CONDEMNATION

1. Theology

- a. God hates all LGBTQ-identified people
- b. LGBTQ-identified people deserve death (based on literal interpretations of Scriptures like Psalm 11, Leviticus 20:13)

2. Origin: spirit (spiritual rebellion)

3. Pastoral care - no redemption for the reprobate

4. Outcome for the overcomer - guilt, shame, condemnation, alienation from God

5. Strengths and weaknesses - weakness only; gross misrepresentation of the gospel

6. Proponents

- a. Westboro Baptist Church
- b. Pastor Roger Jimenez of Verity Baptist Church in Sacramento, CA - response to the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting

➤ AFFIRMATION (SIDE A)

1. Theology

- a. God affirms gay partnerships/gay marriage
- b. “Homosexual” mistranslated

2. Origin: body (born gay)

3. Pastoral care

- a. God affirms gay marriage/partnerships
- b. Consider “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” fixed and unchanging categories

- c. Malign transformation as “conversion therapy”
- d. Syncretism – integrates fallen culture with Christian experience

4. Outcome for the overcomer: individual feels affirmed, but those who persist in unrepentant homoerotic behavior will not inherit the kingdom of God



“Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men 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.”

1 Corinthians 6:9-11, NIV*

5. Strengths - God loves everyone

Weaknesses - Err on side of fearing man over fearing God (change theology to match subjective experience)

6. Proponents

- a. Matthew Vines, *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships*
- b. Justin Lee, *Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays-vs.-Christians Debate*
- c. *Forging a Sacred Weapon: How the Bible Became Anti-Gay* and accompanying documentary 1946: *The Mistranslation That Shifted Culture*

*Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, NIV. © 2011.

➤ ACCOMMODATION (SIDE B)

1. Theology

- a. Hold to traditional sexual ethic
- b. Accommodate “celibate gay Christian” identity and “mixed orientation marriages”

2. Origin: body (likened to a physical disability as a result of the Fall)

3. Pastoral care

- a. Orientation is both an identity and gift
- b. Malign transformation as “conversion therapy”
- c. Encourage “spiritual friendships” to ease loneliness
- d. Subtle syncretism – integrates LGBTQ culture with Christianity

4. Outcome for the overcomer

- a. Fixation on fallen desires keeps believer enslaved to sinful impulses with no hope for change
- b. Root wounds in the soul are left unattended/unresolved which can perpetuate SSA



“For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.”

Romans 6:14

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Ephesians 4:22-24

5. Strengths - compassion for those who struggle with their sexuality

Weaknesses - form of godliness that denies the power of God to transform (2 Timothy 3:5)

6. Proponents

- a. Revoice
- b. Preston Sprinkle, *Embodied and People to Be Loved*
- c. Wesley Hill, *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality*
- d. Nate Collins (leader of Revoice), *All But Invisible: Exploring Identity Questions at the Intersection of Faith, Gender, and Sexuality*
- e. Mark Yarhouse, *Costly Obedience: What We Can Learn from the Celibate Gay Christian Community*

➔ MORTIFICATION (SIDE Y)

1. Theology - mortify (kill, put to death) sin, including gay identity and homoerotic behavior

"

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming."

Colossians 3:5-6

2. Origin: spirit - entirely spiritual issue; sin nature resulting from the Fall

3. Pastoral care

- a. Emphasize repentance and spiritual disciplines
- b. Malign transformation as “conversion therapy” and secular psychology

4. Outcome for the overcomer

- a. Left with unattended wounds in the soul which may contribute to ongoing SSA and the belief that desires may never change but can only be resisted
- b. Theological framework does not typically involve exploration of roots and resolution via inner healing, deliverance, and engaging the gifts of the Holy Spirit

5. Strengths

- a. Follows biblical sexual ethic
- b. Renounce gay identity
- c. Emphasizes repentance and living a holy life by dying to sinful desires

Weaknesses

- a. Stops short of exploring wounds in the soul (trauma/past experiences) that may contribute to SSA
- b. Unwittingly reinforces “born-gay, can’t change” narrative by insisting that SSA is entirely a spiritual issue; only solution is repentance and resisting unchangeable desires until Jesus returns

6. Proponents

- a. Jackie Hill Perry, *Gay Girl, Good God: The Story of Who I Was, and Who God Has Always Been*
- b. Sam Allberry, *Is God Anti-Gay? And Other Questions About Homosexuality, the Bible and Same-Sex Attraction*

- c. Christopher Yuan, *Holy Sexuality and the Gospel: Sex, Desire, and Relationships Shaped by God's Grand Story*
- d. Becket Cook, *A Change of Affection: A Gay Man's Incredible Story of Redemption*
- e. Rachel Gilson, *Born Again This Way: Coming Out, Coming to Faith, and What Comes Next*
- f. Rosaria Butterfield, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert: An English Professor's Journey Into Christian Faith*

➔ TRANSFORMATION (SIDE X)

1. Theology

- a. Similar to mortification approach (renounce gay identity and behavior)
- b. Goes beyond mortification by investigating wounds in the soul that may contribute to the development of SSA (gender insecurity/teasing, adverse family dynamics, childhood, sexual abuse, or other trauma)

2. Origin: spirit, soul, body (holistic approach)

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Same-sex attractions result from the Fall (spirit) and developmental influences affect the mind, will, and emotions (soul) which impact psychosexual development and resulting sexual urges (body)

3. Pastoral care

- a. Redemptive relationships within the Body of Christ
- b. Relies on the Holy Spirit to minister to wounds in the soul that contribute to SSA and/or gender dysphoria (healing prayer, emotional/inner healing, deliverance)

4. Outcome for the overcomer

- a. Understanding the reasons for disordered desires and finding resolution imparts hope and faith for change
- b. Difference between temptation vs. domination

5. Strengths

- a. Follows biblical sexual ethic
- b. Holistic discipleship (spirit, soul, body)
- c. Aligns with Pentecostal distinctives (baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine healing, and deliverance, etc.)

Weaknesses

- a. Some pursue change instead of Jesus (change is a byproduct, not the goal itself)
- b. Some misunderstand change to mean the removal of all temptation
- c. Some strugglers experience a relapse during times of stress; others attempt change but go back to gay life (pro-gay advocates use relapses as evidence that change doesn't happen)
- d. Transformation is often mislabeled "conversion therapy"
- e. Amazon and social media platforms ban transformation resources in an attempt to silence the message that change is possible
- f. Some have been defiled against inner healing and/or deliverance because of negative experiences with "flaky" ministries not grounded in the Word

6. Proponents

- a. ReStory Ministries
- b. Restored Hope Network
- c. CHANGED Movement
- d. Joe Dallas, *Desires in Conflict: Hope for Men Who Struggle With Sexual Identity*
- e. Anne Paulk, *Restoring Sexual Identity: Hope for Women Who Struggle with Same-Sex Attractions*
- f. Pure Passion Media, *Such Were Some of You* documentary
- g. Linda A. Seiler, PhD, *TRANS-FORMATION: A Former Transgender's Response to LGBTQ*

➔ CONCLUDING REMARKS

Knowledge of the differing streams and their corresponding perspectives is critical when it comes to navigating resources on LGBTQ with discernment.



*“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb,
and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not
their lives unto the death.”*

Revelation 12:11, KJV

➤ QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

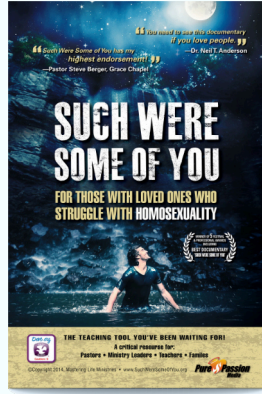
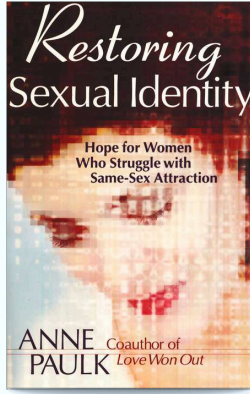
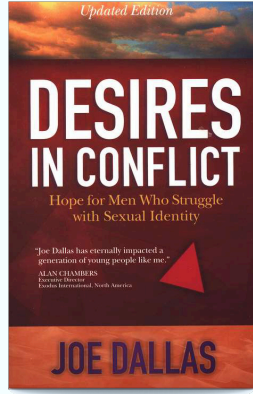
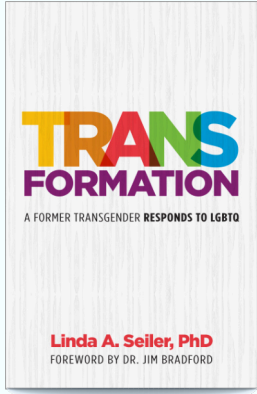
1. Identify and define areas of overlap and distinction between the 5 streams.
2. Which of these 5 streams characterizes your perspective?
3. Is your church engaged in the LGBTQ conversation? Do you know where your pastors and leaders stand in light of these differing responses

4. Can you think of anyone (overcomer or family member/friend of overcomer) who started in one stream and ended up in another? What were the reasons for their change in perspective? How will your understanding of the 5 streams enable you to continue the dialogue?

5. Have you read any of the books or watched any of the documentaries listed? How does your awareness of the 5 streams affect your evaluation of these resources? In what ways will it impact how you navigate LGBTQ resources?

6. Is there a stream that offers the most desirable outcome for the overcomer? Which one and why?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



WHEN THE CHURCH
IS EQUIPPED, NEW
STORIES ARE TOLD.