



# TOOL FOR PASTORS & OTHER CHURCH LEADERS MATTERS OF SEXUALITY (LGBTQ++) & IDENTITY

## CHOOSING WISELY THE SPEAKERS & RESOURCES TO SPEAK AT YOUR CHURCH & TRAIN YOUR MINISTRY TEAM

Do you feel ill-equipped to fully understand and speak about the tough issues facing your church today related to sexuality and identity matters? How do you balance biblical truth and compassion for those in your church who are dealing with these issues personally, in their families, in the workplace and in the community?

### Finding Resources

There are a multitude of Christian speakers, organizations and resources to choose from offering training geared towards Churches and Ministry Leaders based on theology and doctrine that may be very different from what you believe and what your Church teaches. Further complicating this challenge, is the published advertising for various training resources will appear to be doctrinally sound, and only after you invite the speaker, do you realize the nuanced differences between what they are saying and what your Church teaches. This is especially troublesome when personal testimonies tug at the heart of the listeners and can lead people to reject Church doctrine and theology as too harsh and no longer relevant for today.

### Asking Good Questions

When considering bringing an authority on these matters to your Church, it is important to ask probing questions of the speaker or trainer to fully discern their theology on the topics they will be presenting so you know if it aligns with your belief and doctrine. Nearly all of the trainers will use Scripture to back their teaching, but you will notice different interpretations of the same Scriptures if you listen closely. Finally, ask them to define any terms they are using that you have questions about. The same word can mean different things to different people.

**Before choosing a trainer or speaker, interview more than one, and at a minimum, ask the following questions:**

1. *What is your ultimate goal in providing training to pastors and church leaders on the topic of sexuality and identity?*

**Some common viewpoints:**

- Fully embrace and affirm people in their current identity and sexual expression, teaching that God is pleased with their lives and does not require anything different of them.
- Embrace, welcome and love people who experience same-sex attraction and LGBTQ++ identity and teach that full surrender to the work of the Spirit of God brings transformation/change while loving Christians walk with them through the process of transformation.

2. *What is your position on biblical identity and what Scriptures do you base your answer on?*

**Some common viewpoints:**

- Fully embrace a gay or transgender identity (God made me this way).
- My identity is in Christ alone and is in no way attached to my feelings or experiences.

3. *What is your position on biblical sexuality and what Scriptures do you base your answer on?*

**Some common viewpoints:**

- God made me this way and affirms same-gender sexual expression.
- Same-gender sexual expression is sinful and celibacy is the only God-honoring choice even if a person still identifies themselves as gay.
- Transformation/change is possible and achievable by the grace of God with the person no longer identifying themselves as gay.

4. *What is your position on God's desire & ability to completely transform lives and what Scriptures do you base your answer on?*

**Some common viewpoints:**

- God created people with gay-identity and same-sex attractions, therefore transformation is not needed.
- God made a mistake in forming the gender of some people, therefore we need to support them in their identity and medical intervention efforts.
- God desires to, and does fully transform lives.