



## LGBTI People And Religion – Is It Like “Trying To Mix Oil And Water”?

The title of this blog is a variation on the chapter title: “Gay men and Religion: Mixing Water and Oil?” from an edited book I first read many years ago ([Gay Life: Leisure, Love and Living for the Contemporary Gay Male](#) – edited by Eric E. Rofes).

Some people (wrongly) think that it is not possible to be both religious and an LGBTI person.

There are however any number of people who have integrated their Homosexuality (or bisexuality) and their religious beliefs.

Apart from those who have come to recognise and accept their “God-given” love for another person of the same gender and maintain their religious beliefs and practices.

Sure, there will be those who try to selectively quote the bible, to justify their anti-LGBTI attitudes and beliefs. We can also expect there may well be a lot of heated debates and rhetoric around the government’s proposed “Religious Freedom” laws.

Admittedly I have written a few articles around this subject for Perth’s LGBTI publication, *Out In Perth*. See e.g. [“Reaching out and sharing stories under the cloud of ‘religious freedom’](#) “ and [“How do we protect ourselves from the culture wars?”](#) as well as [“A mental health survival guide for the religious freedom debate”](#).

But if you want some ideas of how you can reply to those who try to say you can’t be LGBTI and religious, (and have a bit of a laugh) you might be interested to read the [“Letter to Dr Laura”](#) about [“Why can’t I own Canadians as slaves”](#) that circulated on the internet some years ago.

But those who have actually studied the bible with an open (rather than a closed) mind have come to realise that trying to use the bible to justify opposition to LGBTI people are standing on rather “Shaky” ground.

The following is an excerpt of my submission to “The Expert Panel to Examine Religious Freedom in Australia.”;

For *at least* 30 years there have been theological arguments about whether or not the bible condemns homosexuality. With John Boswell’s (1980) book *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* being one of the most highly researched (and widely cited) on the subject.



Briefly it explains how various translations of the Bible have significant mis-translations which are affected by the times in which they were published. (The book also won the 1981 *American Book Award for History* prize.)

This is apart from what has been written in the context of other religions e.g. Rosco and Murray, (1997), regarding *Islamic Homosexualities*, or [Swidler](#) (1993) with chapters on *Buddhism* and *Hinduism*, amongst others.

For those wanting some idea of how other's have reconciled their religious beliefs and their homosexuality, you might like to read, for example; "[Bulletproof faith : a spiritual survival guide for gay and lesbian Christians](#)", by Candace Chellew-Hodge, or; "[The Lord is my shepherd and he knows I'm gay](#)" : the autobiography of the Rev. Troy D. Perry, as told to Charles L. Lucas.

To quote [Wikipedia](#) "Troy Deroy Perry Jr (born July 27, 1940) is the founder of the [Metropolitan Community Church](#), a [Protestant denomination](#) with a special affirming ministry with the [lesbian](#), [gay](#), [bisexual](#), and [transgender](#) communities, in [Los Angeles](#) on October 6, 1968."

The bottom line for this blog would be that you can be religious and a member of the LGBTI community. One of the best ways of protecting yourself (and your mental health) is to get involved in one of the "supportive" groups of religious people. You can also make a booking (Phone **1300 50 67 68** ) to speak with me (although I'm not a theological expert) about reconciling your religious beliefs and your homosexuality.

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