

Differing Viewpoints on the Bible and God: Fundamentalist and Progressive Christians

There are basic differences between viewpoints of fundamentalist Christian churches and progressive Christian churches regarding the Bible and God.

- Fundamentalist Christian churches of today generally preach that every word of the Bible came directly from God, and that there are no errors in the Bible.
- On the other hand, progressive Christian churches study the Bible where they explore questions such as: who wrote this particular book in the Bible, when was it written, who was the audience, and why was it written?
- Fundamentalist ministers teach that God is omnipresent, all powerful, and all knowing God, i.e., the model of God we typically learned in Sunday school.
- Progressive Christian ministers and rabbis generally embrace *Process Theology* as the model of God that better fits the world today.
- Because of newfound understanding that sexual orientation is NOT a choice, fundamentalist ministers are in difficulty today trying to reconcile that knowledge with their personal religious beliefs.
- Progressive Christian denominations such as the United Church of Christ, the Unitarian Universalists, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church, and the Presbyterian Church of America have either fully embraced gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders, or have taken major steps toward full acceptance.
- Due primarily to the mainstream media in the US (and justice-seeking ministers and allies), the change in the understanding of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders (GLBT) has been surprisingly rapid in the past 10 years. Research and study in major universities as well as clinical studies of societies has shown that a percentage of people in all cultures of the world will be gay, lesbian bisexuals or transgenders.
- Because of the relative freedom of information within the US, mainstream books, TV and movies show gay characters frequently as a normal part of everyday life.

In many cultures and in many families, sex is hardly ever mentioned, much less discussion of sexual orientation. In those families, the expectation is that every child will be heterosexual. Such parents will find it very difficult to accept a child who is not heterosexual. Much more difficult is the predicament of the child, who fears the day when he or she might have to disclose their sexual orientation. Widespread information on the diversity of sexual orientation will help ALL parents and ALL children.

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