

Thank you

<SLIDE1>

Good evening.

I hope you enjoyed your dinner.

Please feel free to have a drink as I speak.

I will be having one myself. <SLIDE2>

I would like to start this talk.

Following the footsteps.

A LGBT friend.

His name is Sam.

Sam often give talks related to LGBT.

And he always begins his talks.

With a big thank you.

I find that very appropriate and right.

So following Sam's footsteps.

Let me say - thank you.

Not just for coming to this talk.

But thank you for caring.

About this particular issue.

I believe.

For most - if not all of us here tonight.

This is not.

A cultural or political or an abstract issue.

But it concerns real people.

We know and love.

Our friends and relatives.

People close to us.

Or it concerns ourselves.

So thank you for coming.

Sorry

Next. I would like to say sorry. <SLIDE3>

Let me explain.

First of all.

Some of you may know.

Christians in the west had in the past.

Hurt the LGBT community deeply.

There have been ugly protests and name calling.

Some Christians have also followed.

The societal trend of that time.

In advocating conversion therapies.

Some involving electro-shocks.

Others involving vomit-inducing chemicals.

These are very gruesome.

And horrifying even to mention.

I feel deeply sorry.

For what that generation of LGBT.

Had gone through.

Secondly.

I'm also aware that local Christians.

Had in the past been unhelpful.

In 2015 Lawrence Khong led his church FCBC.

In the Wear White Campaign.

With the slogan:

We will wear white until the pink is gone.

Even though I wasn't involved.

And I disagree with Lawrence Khong.

I still want to say.

I feel sorry just to hear of what had been done.

In the name of Christianity.

Thirdly & lastly.

When I was growing up. I was personally guilty of teasing.

My LGBT friends in school.

I'm sorry for such form of bully.

I'm sorry for leaving them.

To their loneliness and isolation.

Approach

My approach tonight is simple. <SLIDE4>

As you would all know – I'm a Christian.

I haven't always been one.

I became one in uni.

Most of you are obviously not Christian.

So you are probably not very familiar.

With the Bible and the teaching of Jesus.

So my job tonight is simply to show you.

Jesus' teaching related to this issue.

For us to dialogue.

I want us to engage directly with what Jesus says.

Not what Kenneth thinks.

Or what Choices or TrueLoveis says.

I do have good friends who are LGBT.

But that doesn't make me an expert.

So I'm also looking forward to learning from you tonight.

My talk comprises 2 parts. <SLIDE5>

In Part 1: I want to Debunk 3 Common Christian Myths.

These are what many Christians.

Commonly believe concerning LGBT.

Which I think misrepresent the Bible.

In Part 2: I want to show you how the Bible.

Challenges 3 Common Life Mantras.

These are common secular mantras.

Which I believe undergird.

Our view on LGBT.

Before I start the talk proper, let me show you a video of Sam.

I met Sam a couple of times when I lived in KL.

Sam works as a pastor in the UK.

He visited my church in KL quite frequently.

To do training and give talks.

Sam experiences same-sex attraction.

It is my privilege to have known Sam. <SLIDE6>

Myth 1: “LGBTs must convert to heterosexuals to enter heaven.”

<SLIDE7> Some Christians hold this view more explicitly than others.

In its most extreme and ugly form.

We see online.

American Christians holding up signs saying: <SLIDE8>

God hates Fags. Fags go to hell.

Most Christians may not be as blatant.

But many nevertheless believe that.

LGBTs must convert to heterosexuals.

And that explains all the attempts.

At reparative or conversion therapy.

But let me show you what God actually says.

About who gets into heaven and who doesn't.

Who is righteous in God's eyes and who isn't. <SLIDE9>

[Romans 3:10-12]

There is no one righteous. Not even one.

No one understands. No one seeks God.

All have turned away. All have become worthless.

No one does good. Not even one.

The Bible is very clear.

In the eyes of the perfect God.

No one – not even heterosexuals are righteous.

Being a heterosexual doesn't get me into heaven.

It doesn't make getting there easier either.

Jesus once told a story about who gets into heaven. <SLIDE10>

[Luke 18:10-14]

10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray,

one a Pharisee – a religious teacher

and the other a tax collector – someone despised as a sinner.

11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed this:

‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men,

extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’

**13 But the tax collector, standing far off,
would not even lift up his eyes to heaven,
but beat his breast, saying,
'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'**

Jesus says:

**14 I tell you, the tax collector went down to his house justified,
rather than the Pharisee. Because everyone who exalts
himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself
will be exalted."**

In other words. According to Jesus.

Heterosexuals who go to church.

Religiously every week.

Who pray and sing.

But - are proud and self-righteous.

They trust in themselves and not in God.

They think that God will save them.

Because they are so good and so upright.

Just like the Pharisee.

Well. God won't let them into heaven.

But whoever, whoever.

Including LGBTs who experience.

Same-sex attraction.

Whoever acknowledge God.

Who humble themselves before God.

And trust Him and listen to Him.

Like the tax collector.

Asking for God's mercy.

Well. God will exalt. They will be in heaven.

So. Is God Anti-gay?

Well. At heaven's gate.

God's question will not be.

Are you L-G-B-T-Q or straight.

No. Your sexual orientation is irrelevant.

God sees LGBT same as everyone else.

The important question is.

Do you want to trust in yourself or in God?

Are you self-righteous or humble before Him?

Myth 2: “LGBTs can’t be inborn.”

<SLIDE11> Some Christians argue that.

Because no gay gene has been found.

LGBTs’ homoerotic feelings.

Must have been nurtured not a nature.

It can’t be inborn.

I’m not going to debate here.

The cause of our sexual orientation.

Nurtured or nature.

I believe the biblical data allows for both.

The truth is: Jesus teaches that.

Every single person.

LGBTs or heterosexuals.

All of us - are born not quite right.

Sin has distorted and disordered us.

In a very deep way. From the beginning.

Every single one of us. <SLIDE12>

Is born broken in our sexuality.

Isn’t it true. Everyone of us has sexual desires.

That are not quite right in one way or another.

Even if you are heterosexual.

Personally I find this.

A slamdunk diagnosis/indictment of heterosexuals. <SLIDE13>

It explains the toxic, yet multi-billion dollar porn industry.

It explains the brutal, yet unstoppable global sex-trafficking.

It explains the never-ending infidelity and adultery.

That still destroys marriages today.

And leave many children vulnerable.

We are all born broken in our sexuality.

In one way or another.

We are sexually attracted to things we shouldn’t be.

In fact this is why.

Jesus came and preached.

That everyone needs to be born again. <SLIDE14>

[John 3:3] 3 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Jesus is bluntly saying:

Kenneth you didn't come out right the first time.

You are born deeply broken.

You are messed up inside.

Not just sexually. But in every aspect.

And Kenneth.

A make-over.

Some new habits.

A little dose of religion.

Plus some self-help.

And try harder.

Won't fix you.

You are so fundamentally flawed at heart.

You are born so spiritually misaligned.

That you need a complete rebirth.

Which I am here to give.

You need a complete rebirth.

Which I am here to give.

And friends.

Being a Christian.

Means I eat the humble pie.

And accept God's diagnosis of me.

Rather than being too proud and self-righteous.

To accept it.

Myth 3: 'LGBTs are the worst sinners'.

<SLIDE15> Most Christians won't say it so blatantly.

But many do act as though.

LGBTs are the worst sinners.

Did you know God speaks against greed.

Probably ten times more than sexual immorality.

The Bible goes very hard.

On greed and materialism.

And when I last checked.

No Christians have put up banners.

And campaign against greed <SLIDE16>

In [Luke 12:15] Jesus says.

Watch out and be on guard against all greed because one's life is not in the abundance of his possessions.

In [Matthew 23:25] Jesus says.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence!

And in instances.

Where sexual immorality is mentioned in the Bible.

It is mentioned alongside what many Christians.

Would regard as inconsequential sins. <SLIDE17>

[1 Corinthians 6:9-10]

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who *practice homosexuality*, nor thieves, nor the *greedy*, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Friends. In God's eyes.

LGBT practicing homosexuality is.

No more sinful than being greedy.

So why single out LGBTs.

When in fact all have sinned.

All have not lived God's way..

All in need of God's forgiveness.

With the 3 Myths debunked.
Next I would like to.
Show you how the Bible challenges.
Three common Life Mantras.
Which I believe undergird.
Our views on LGBT.

There are many Life Mantras. <SLIDE18>
That we all subconsciously live by.
Growing up I have a few ingrained in me:
There is only one road to success.
It is called hard work.
Life only comes around once.
Do what makes you happy.
Do well in exams.
And you will have a good life.
I grew up in the 90s.
So it was said get your 5Cs.
And your will be happy.
I hear these Mantras.
And I somehow just believe.
And live by them.

Mantra 1: 'To truly live is to be free to act on our feelings.'

// We live in a culture which is adamant that.

There is no higher good than self-expression & self-fulfilment.

<SLIDE19> We are a generation that.

Prizes and esteems freedom.

In particular - the freedom to act on our feelings.

Our feelings are us.

They are real and significant.

We must be free to act on them.

That is the vibe isn't it.

All my life. I conceal. Don't feel. Don't let them know.

Well. Now they know. Let it go.

Can't hold it back anymore. Let it go.

The fears that once controlled me.

Can't get to me at all.

It's time to see what I can do.

To test the limits and break through.

No right. No wrong. No rules for me. I'm free.

It just sounds and feels.

So powerful and inspiring doesn't it.

Follow your feelings.

Listen to your heart.

But there is a problem with this mantra.

Think about it:

If someone today.

Don't say no to their feelings and desires.

They just do whatever they feel.

What would we do the person?

We lock them up don't we?

Would you spend even 10 minutes alone.

With someone who does.

Whatever he desires.

And acts on whatever feelings he has.

Listen to what Jesus says. <SLIDE20>

[Matthew 16:24]

If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

Jesus is saying:

If we want to truly live.

If we want to find our true self.

The way to do that is.

Not to follow wherever our desires lead.

But to live a life of self-denial.

Stop following our deepest wants.

And start following Jesus.

This is utterly utterly.

Counter-cultural isn't it.

It is saying.

Learn to repress.

Not express - your impulses.

Totally counter-cultural. Counter-intuitive.

But think about it.

As I reflect on myself.

Given that I'm so deeply broken because of sin.

My desires are not always good.

My feelings are not always constructive.

My wants are typically selfish.

Do I really want to live a life.

Where I can't hold it back anymore.

No right. No wrong. No rules for me.

Where I don't ever deny myself.

And I just let it go and follow my desire.

Certainly no.

I want to leave all that broken desires behind.

And follow Jesus instead.

Who has a CV of living a perfect life.

Who has never sin.

And who promises to give me strength.

To walk in his ways.

Mantra 2: 'Unless we're romantically and sexually satisfied, we aren't living fully.'

<SLIDE21> Hollywood used to be the biggest advocate of this.

Depending on how old you are.

You might remember. <SLIDE22>

The Notebook. Titanic. Fifty Shades.

In recent years the Korean dramas have joined in.

Strong Woman Do Bong Soon.

The Last Empress. Boys Over Flower.

Regardless Hollywood or K-Drama.

The message is the same isn't it:

Unless you're romantically sexually fulfilled.

Your life will never be full.

When your sex life hasn't worked out.

Your life hasn't work out.

Life without romance & sex is no life at all.

This mantra rings in our ears every single day.

Friends.

The mere existence of Jesus exposes the flaw in this mantra.

The Bible tells us that.

Jesus is the most complete and fully human.

Who ever lived.

And he was not married.

Not in a romantic relationship.

And never had sex.

And yet he is the most human human.

Most complete person.

Who ever walked on this earth.

You see. The Bible tells us that.

While romance and sex are good gifts from God.

To be enjoyed in the right context.

The key to life is not found in our sexuality.

Romance and sex will never truly satisfy.

Because contrary to what Hollywood tells me.

The very core of my being is not my sexuality.

I'm much more than my sexuality. <SLIDE23>

Jesus says. **[John 6:35]**

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Jesus is saying.

Come and know me. Follow me.

Only I can truly satisfy you.

Not romance. Not sex.

Not marriage. Not career.

Not fame. Not success.

Look at the millions in our world.

Who has spend their life.

Chasing down those rabbit holes.

Where did they end up?

Jesus says:

I am your Creator.

I made you.

I am the only one.

Who can give you meaning.

And significance.

That truly satisfies.

I feed your soul.

That it will never go hungry and thirsty.

Mantra 3: 'Marriage is the Everest of human relationship.'

<SLIDE24> Last Mantra: 'And they lived happily ever after'.

Since young.

Before we can even read.

We have been sold the idea.

That marriage is to be the happy ending for all our lives.

Marriage is the Everest of human relationships. <SLIDE25>

Growing up. Year after year.

We receive reinforcements.

To this same message.

Are you attached yet?

When are you getting married?

Why are you still single?

It is time to settle down.

You don't want to be left on the shelf.

Now. If marriage is so good.

You would expect God to make.

Such a good thing last for forever wouldn't you.

Or at least last for a thousand years. <SLIDE26>

And a thousand more.

As Christina Perri puts it.

Listen to what Jesus says about marriage. <SLIDE27>

[Matthew 22:30]

In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

In other words.

Jesus revealed that there will be no marriage in heaven.

This institution called marriage.

Will forever cease to exist in heaven.

Does it surprise you that Christianity.

Actually teaches that?

In heaven. Where humanity is meant to live perfect lives.

Enjoy a perfect happy relationship.

With God and with one another.

Marriages will cease to exist there.

Why?

Friends. This will sound shocking to you.
But remember I didn't make this up.
This is what God showed me.
And now He is showing you from His word.
You see. God did not design.
Marriage as an end in itself.
He designed it for a higher purpose.
And that purpose expires in heaven.

Let me show you. <SLIDE28>

[Genesis 1:27, 2:24]

1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him male and female he created them.

2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

So yes from the beginning.

God did purposefully designed mankind.

To comprise male and female.

And he intended that.

The two should come together to become one.

Joined together intimately in marriage.

But God also designed marriage for this <SLIDE29>

[Ephesians 5:31-32]

31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

What it is saying is that:

God designed. God invented.

God came up with the idea of marriage.

He built marriage into the fabric of creation.

He created gender differences.

He created mankind male and female.

God did all that.

For the purpose of echoing in creation.

The relationship between Christ and the church.

This is the higher purpose of all marriages.

You can understand it this way:

God made marriage to be like a movie trailer.

That runs over and over again in this world.

And He is saying to us.

If after observing or experiencing earthly marriages.

After you have watched this trailer.

And you like it.

Because you find this relationship.

Safe and secure. Deep and satisfying.

Loved and cherished.

Well. That's just a small taste.

Of the full movie.

Of the relationship I've planned to have with you.

For eternity.

That's what I created. I love you.

Yes you blatantly rejected me as your Creator.

But I will forgive you when you come back to me.

My Son has died for all your wrongs.

I made you to live in joy with you for eternity.

I will marry you for eternity.

LGBTs or heterosexuals.

We all longed to be loved.

We are made to love and be loved.

But we go around seeking acceptance and love.

From all the wrong places.

That fail and disappoint us over and over again.

Why not consider God's love for us.

He tells us through His word the Bible.

That he created us. He loved us.

When we walked away.

He persisted in the relationship.

He pursued us. Even when it hurts.

Our greatest joy is not found in earthly marriages.

But in knowing this loving God.

And being loved and cared by him for eternity.

Marriage is not the Everest of human relationship.

It is just the tip of the iceberg of God's love.

Conclusion

I have Debunked 3 Common Christian Myths.

I have shown you how Jesus and the Bible.

Challenges 3 Common Life Mantras.

In the process of doing that.

I have introduced you to Jesus and his teaching.

I hope that has been clear and helpful.

Earlier Zoe joked that.

I will have diagrams for you.

As a matter of fact – I have and I will end with one.

I know another LGBT.

His name is Wesley.

He is gay since young.

By the way.

If you are a friend of someone who is LGBT.

Or you would call yourself a LGBT supporter.

I would strongly recommend you Wesley's book.

It would really help you empathize.

And get into the world of an LGBT.

Wesley writes very candidly.

He doesn't hold back his deep emotions.

He lets you in and see it all.

His desire and longing.

The hurt and pain of being stigmatized.

Anyway.

Wesley shared this. He said:

If he were to look at God's call to him as a LGBT.

To refrain from gay sex – in isolation.

God's demand seems. <SLIDE30>

Old-fashioned. Life-taking. Oppressive.

Stifling. Irrational. Harsh. Unattainable.

But could it be that if I place God's demand.

Into a larger story. <SLIDE31>

Then perhaps it won't seem as irrational and harsh.

As it otherwise might?

Could the Christian story of what God did for the world in Christ.
Be the framework that makes the rule.
'Don't go to bed with a partner of the same sex'
make sense?

Wesley helped me in this talk.
He shared with me the flourishing life.
Under Christ he is living now.
As one with same-sex attraction.
And abstaining a gay lifestyle.
He lives now as one.
Washed by the blood of Christ.
Reconciled to God.
And as one waiting for Christ's return.