



This resource was developed to assist clergy and lay leaders in leading a healthy and respectful congregational dialogue on the most difficult task of discernment facing the church in our time. The 250+ page book features wisdom distilled from thirteen congregations which have undertaken this dialogue. Other materials include articles focused on Bible study and theological reflection as well as scientific/medical and psychological studies.

Stories from gay and lesbian Christians and their families are included, as well as from congregations which have struggled with the questions of sexual orientation and Christian faith. An extensive annotated bibliography encourages further exploration.

Praise for Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

"This is the best collection of authors addressing the most important issues regarding sexual orientation and the clearest witness to Christian inclusiveness that I have seen. *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* will bring biblical depth and theological maturity to the discussion of this most volatile controversy threatening the unity of churches." —James A. Forbes Jr., Senior Minister, The Riverside Church, New York, New York

"*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* is a well-written and thoughtfully presented resource. Believing that God loves all people, and that Jesus died for all, I found this

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study to answer questions I have had, and to put me in touch with thoughtful folks who have opened doors that have been shut too long. I recommend it for individual and congregational study.” —*Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, retired executive director, Woman’s Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention and former moderator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship*

□ “While the American Baptist Churches, USA, through its General Board, affirmed that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching, that same body has also called for dialogue on issues of human sexuality, recognizing that considerable differences of opinion exist. *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* is an extremely valuable contribution to the discussion of sexual orientation. It represents a thoughtful, compassionate and articulate perspective that must be at the table in any dialogue.” —*Daniel E. Weiss, former General Secretary, American Baptist Churches USA*

□ “As someone involved in biblical feminism and gay Christian liberation for over 25 years, I didn’t expect to find any new insights in this document . . . but there they were! Whatever a congregation’s priorities might be—evangelical outreach, prophetic confrontation, faithfulness to Scripture, community-building, doing justice, loving mercy, or just walking humbly with God—this collection is relevant. The combination is powerful: precise and passionate biblical exegesis, riveting personal narratives, summaries of medical and psychological research, organizational position statements, a helpful list of resources, and practical tips from congregations who have been pioneers on the inclusive pathway—all together, an original and useful resource.” —*Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, co-author of Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?, Sensuous Spirituality: Out from Fundamentalism and a forthcoming new book, Gender Justice: A Christian and Trans-Religious Approach to Omnigender*

□ “This is a superb resource for the entire spectrum of issues related to homosexuality, from biblical and theological reflection to practical actions that can be taken to bring about genuine acceptance of gays and lesbians in our churches.” —*Walter Wink, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City and editor of Homosexuality and Christian Faith*

□ “We desperately need to speak and listen to one another at a time when denominations, congregations and even families are divided on the issue of human sexuality. As an evangelical I am grateful that the quest for an authentic biblical position includes this resource.” —*Tom Clifton, President, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Kansas*

□ “This resource is comprehensive, positive and respectful of the reality that we are not all beginning at the same place. The wisdom, sensitivity and deep spirituality reflected here provide a secure context for honest searching for the “mind of Christ.” —*Marcus C. Pomeroy & Marcia B. Bailey, Pastoral Team, Central Baptist Church, Wayne, Pennsylvania*

□ “There has been much heat produced and relatively little light shed on the topic of sexual orientation. I urge believers of all theological persuasions to grapple with the theological essays and compelling narratives in *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*. These folks shed light.” —*David L. Wheeler, Senior Minister, First Baptist Church of Los Angeles, California*

□ “Because of our nonhierarchical structure, we Baptists have an opportunity to lead the way to the full acceptance of God’s gay and lesbian children into the churches of Jesus Christ. I am profoundly grateful for the light of truth and wisdom that this book shines on our struggle.” —*Peggy Campolo is a popular author and speaker, and a member of the Council of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists*

□ “The matter of sexual orientation is one of the most urgent issues facing our churches. This book’s guidance will help congregations steer clear of the divisive debate and engage in a reconciling dialogue on the meaning of Christian discipleship.” —*Mark M. Clinger, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Madison, Wisconsin*

□ “This is a clear, concise and immensely readable treatment of a subject that is literally tearing us apart. It offers churches and individuals who are struggling with this subject collectively or personally a resource for spiritual reflection, study and action. One will not put it down unmoved or untaught.” —*Rodney Romney, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Seattle, Washington*

□ “This is an important resource for congregations and individuals who desire to set a table which includes all of God’s children.” —*Rick Mixon, pastoral counselor and founding member of American Baptists Concerned*

□ “How we decide is as important as what we say. This is part of our baptist witness to the larger church, as well as to the world. This resource is a much needed tool for congregations seeking to make such a witness, as we seek to discern God’s will in dialogue with one another.” —*Kyle Childress, Pastor, Austin Heights Baptist Church, Nacogdoches, Texas*