

Revolution: How Can Christians Survive the Sexual Freedom Narrative Enveloping Our Culture?

The last few decades have witnessed a radical and far-reaching transformation of western attitudes to sex, marriage and gender. Feeling persecuted and under siege, Christians often react defensively or negatively. But what if the sexual revolution has something to teach us? What if we faced up to our own sub-biblical shame culture? And what if we began our critique of the revolution in terms of *its* failed promises rather than *our* moral rules? In this seminar we explore what this new apologetic platform begins to look like.

Glynn Harrison was formerly Professor and Head of Department of Psychiatry, University of Bristol, UK, where he was also a practicing consultant psychiatrist. Now, as an author and speaker, he is interested in issues at the interface between biblically-based faith and psychology, neuroscience, and psychiatry, as well as wider issues of culture and Christian worldview. His most recent book *A Better Story: God, Sex and Human Flourishing* turns a critical eye to the sexual revolution.

I. Revolution: the story we are living in

A. Overview:

(1) Challenge

(2) Scale and impact

B. Secret of the revolution's success: hard power or soft power?

2. Cultural analysis

A. The rise of 'expressive individualism'

B. Compelling moral vision: freedom, flourishing, fairness

C. The power of narrative v. 'facts'

3. A Better Critique of the revolution

A. Paul at the Areopagus (Acts 17): start on their territory not yours

B. Embrace the strengths of the revolution's critique of Christian shame culture

C. Expose the failed promise of the Revolution

Suggested Readings:

1. Harrison G (2017) *A Better Story: God, Sex and Human Flourishing*. IVP/SPCK
2. Crouch, "A Sex without Bodies: the Church's response to the LGBT movement must be that matter matters" (editorial, Christianity Today)
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/july-august/sex-without-bodies.html>
3. Gagnon, R. A.J "The Bible's Surprisingly Consistent Message on a Male-Female requirement for Marriage"
http://www.eggscfe.org.uk/uploads/5/5/6/3/5563632/gagnon_on_consistent_biblical_message_on_male_and_female_marriage.pdf
4. Sanlon, P (2010) *Plastic People: How Queer Theory is Changing Us*. Latimer Studies.