

# Preface

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## Testimony, Theology and the Bisexual Christian Experience in Europe

This book began with a simple but urgent observation: bisexual Christians exist in every corner of Europe, yet their stories are rarely heard, their needs are rarely addressed, and their theological insights are rarely taken seriously. Despite bisexuality being the largest sexual minority within the LGBTQI+ umbrella (Yoshino, 2000;<sup>1</sup> Maliepaard & Baumgartner, 2022),<sup>2</sup> bisexual Christians remain largely invisible in both ecclesial and academic discourse. Their experiences are often subsumed under lesbian and gay narratives, or erased entirely through monosexual assumptions that dominate both queer and Christian spaces (Barker & Langdridge, 2008;<sup>3</sup> Eisner, 2013).<sup>4</sup>

This collection of stories emerged from a desire to correct that erasure. It brings together sixteen bisexual Christians from across Europe (Germany, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Poland, Italy, France, Switzerland, Spain, Russia, Sweden and beyond) each offering a deeply personal account of faith, sexuality and identity. Their stories are diverse

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- 1 Yoshino, K. (2000) 'The epistemic contract of bisexual erasure', *Stanford Law Review*, 52(2), pp. 353–461.
  - 2 Maliepaard, E. & Baumgartner, R. (eds.) (2022) *Bisexuality in Europe: Sexual Citizenship, Romantic Relationships, and Bi+ Identities*. London: Routledge.
  - 3 Barker, M. & Langdridge, D. (2008), 'Bisexuality: Working with a Silenced Sexuality', *Feminism & Psychology*, 18(3), pp. 389–394.
  - 4 Eisner, S. (2013), *'Bi: Notes for a Bisexual Revolution'*, Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.

in age, gender, denomination, ethnicity and cultural background. Yet they share a common thread: each contributor has wrestled with the tension between their bisexual identity and their Christian faith, and each has discovered, in their own way, that these identities need not be in conflict.

The decision to present these narratives in the authors' own voices is intentional. Christian theology has always been shaped by testimony, from the confessions of Augustine to the spiritual autobiographies of Teresa of Ávila, from the liberation narratives of Latin American campesinos to the queer testimonies that shaped early LGBTQ+ theology (Goss, 1993;<sup>5</sup> Cheng, 2011).<sup>6</sup> Testimony is not merely descriptive; it is theological. It reveals how individuals encounter God, interpret Scripture and discern ethical meaning in the midst of lived experience.

The contributors to this volume are theologians in this sense. Their lives articulate a theology of embodiment, relationality and authenticity that challenges the church to expand its understanding of human sexuality and divine love. Their stories reveal the pastoral failures of churches that have remained silent on bisexuality, the psychological toll of erasure, and the resilience of those who continue to seek God in the midst of rejection. They also reveal the creativity, joy, and spiritual depth that bisexual Christians bring to the life of the church.

This book is offered to scholars, clergy, pastoral workers and all who seek to understand the complexity of bisexual Christian experience. It is also offered to bisexual Christians themselves, who may find in these pages echoes of their own journeys, and perhaps a sense of solidarity, validation and hope.

Dr Carol A Shepherd, February 2026

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5 Goss, R. (1993) *Jesus Acted Up: A Gay and Lesbian Manifesto*. San Francisco: Harper-SanFrancisco.

6 Cheng, P.S. (2011) *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology*. New York: Seabury Books.