

Some of the things the Side B community shared with me...

---Being celibate was not good enough

---Experienced conditional acceptance based on whether I was Side B or not ... which made it difficult to know whether you embrace Side B because you believe it, or because you're scared of what the consequences would be if you didn't.

---Being told that defining oneself as being gay was unchristian.

---Being told that anything short of ex-gay was less than the Lord's best.

---That a gay person's difficulties if they choose celibacy are comparable to chastity among heterosexuals. The comparison between straight sexual struggles and gay sexual struggles itself is sometimes the issue. I personally don't think the struggles between the two are the same.

Lacking real empathy, the two straight friends who I shared my struggles with both said that they struggle with celibacy the same way I struggle with celibacy. One is now dating and the other has plans to go on a search for a mate. I don't see how the struggles are the same. I don't have any other option.

Some churches demand gays to be celibate. So, celibacy for gay Christians is not solely a personal choice. The demand could sometimes feel like a heavy burden. The pile up of guilt (e.g. "if you have more faith", "with God all things are possible", "setting our sexuality up as an idol", etc.) on gay Christians just makes that burden worst.

My single straight Christian friends don't need to put up with the same things we put up with.

Both communities will need to listen with empathy before any meaning dialog could take place.

--- I feel there's so much more I wish they knew about me--how it's been like to live in the closet, even as a celibate Side B person. The feelings of isolation, the lack of connection. These are some of the things that are on my heart. To sum it up, my basic need is to get it that they get it, that they understand, perhaps in a deeper way, what our personal experiences have been like.

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