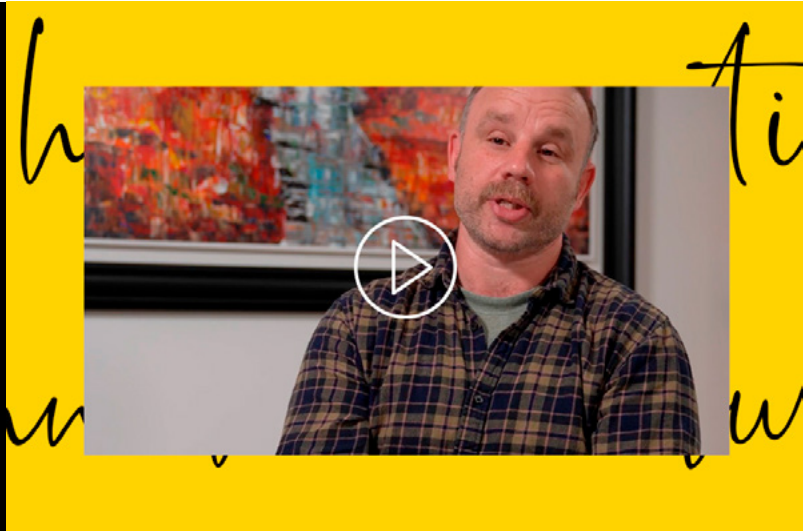


# Finding God in the Margins

JOHN HERRON



**John is a former pastor, former gymnast, Cadbury chocolate connoisseur and gay Christian.**

This talk touches on:

- Early Years
- Teenage Years
- Christian Conversion
- Internal Civil War
- Ordination and sublimation
- Reparative Therapy
- Reconstruction, loss and the 'Truth'
- Finding healing in a new community
- Rebirth

In this talk John talks about his deep-rooted faith, his coming to Christ, his sense of belonging and his love for Zephaniah 3:17. He describes how Bible passages brought deep fear, an internal 'civil war' with a deep longing for being healed and being 'normal'. This led to damaging experiences of reparative therapy. Coming out meant that he had to step back from his ministry but through a process of healing and restoration he has come to a new space of belonging and service.

## Suggested Questions

1. What messages have you absorbed about LGBTQIA+ people from the church?
2. How do such messages contrast with the lived experience of gay people you know (if you know any)?
3. For many this is a non-negotiable issue until it affects them personally. How would you respond if your son/daughter/brother/sister came out as gay?
4. Consider how the analogy of judging a tree by its good or bad fruit might apply here.
5. The authority of the Bible has been used to support many issues over the years, including: slavery, the death penalty, the role of women and anti-semitism. Is it worth considering whether the conventional take on LGBTQIA+ Bible texts might also need re-reading or re-thinking?
6. What costs do you see in the lives of LGBTQIA+ people?