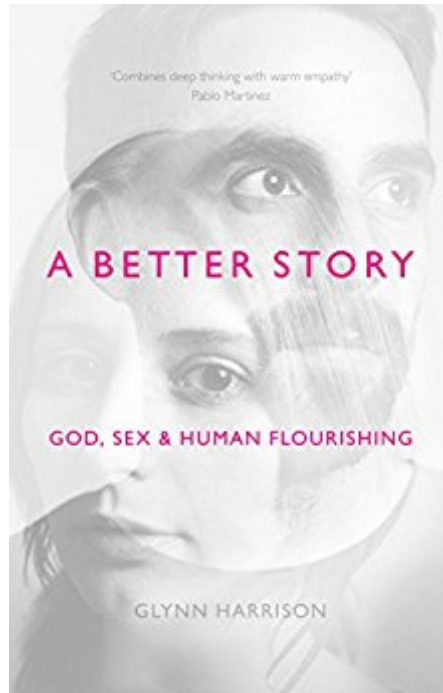




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A Better Story: God, Sex And Human Flourishing



Synopsis

The architects of the sexual revolution won over the popular imagination because they knew the power of story. They drew together radical new ideologies, often complex and hard to grasp, and melded them into the simpler structure of narrative. Crucially, they cast narratives that appealed to the moral instincts of ordinary, decent people. This moral vision overwhelmed the church and silenced its faltering apologists. The author argues that if Christians still believe they have good news in the sphere of sexual ethics, then two big tasks lie ahead. Our first priority is to work out what has gone so badly wrong, both in our understanding and application of what the Bible teaches and the way we have presented our case to the non-churched. And then we must offer a better story, one that fires the imagination with such force that people will say, 'I want that to be true.' This book offers a confident, biblically rooted moral vision which needs to be shared with prayer and courage.

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Customer Reviews

Why has our culture accepted and embraced gay marriage and homosexuality so enthusiastically over the last decade? It's because they tell a better story. Glynn Harrison argues that if Christians who believe in traditional marriage and a sexual ethic that is consistent with historical Christian teaching want their message to prevail, they must begin telling a better story. In *A Better Story: God, Sex, and Human Flourishing*, he says that because of the sexual revolution which began in the mid-twentieth century, "Christians whose views once occupied the mainstream of public morality suddenly feel weird. It's worse than that: they feel guilty." So true. Just try to defend traditional marriage in any public forum and you'll be instantly skewered. A few short years ago, political candidates vehemently defended traditional marriage; now if they do so, they're called bigots. Harrison identifies the rise of individualism as the key culprit in bringing about this cultural change, a "shift away from 'general principles' to individualistic moral reasoning." Meanwhile, "Evangelicals have been caught napping by the scale and speed of cultural change in this area." Evangelicals' responses have been primarily argumentation and condemnation, while "years of watching TV and movies have captured hearts and emptied minds." Harrison writes, "the introduction of gay marriage in the UK arguable owes more to programmes like *Will and Grace* than careful rational argument." The sexual revolution was not all bad: "It is forcing us to acknowledge the poverty of our body-denying pastoral theology." Christians should recognize that the sexual union is an "anticipation of an even deeper with the Divine." The passion feelings we experience "show us the passionate nature of God's love." Rather than focusing on the negative consequences of sex outside of God's plan, "if we want to win hearts and minds with a truly biblical vision of sex and relationships, we need to recover the positive biblical promise of flourishing, too." The two basic human communities--the family and the church--should both support and be supported by our healthy sexuality and relationships. Harrison's arguments are well-crafted and heart-felt. He not only stands firmly on the side of a traditional Christian view of sex as reserved for an act of marriage between one man and one woman, but he does so in a positive, life-giving way. However, by the end of the book I still felt like I did not have a great answer for those who want to follow Jesus while in a same-sex relationship. He even seems to leave the door open for acceptance of non-traditional families. He draws a parallel to missionaries who welcomed into fellowship polygamous converts, allowing for the continuation of polygamous relationships. I honestly don't know how to address those in same-sex relationships who become Christians. Is it better to break up their marriage? What if they have children? Like everyone else from every background, the only place to start is to offer grace and love of Jesus. Harrison's book gets us pointed in the direction of a better story, but there is much work to be done. Thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for the complimentary

electronic review copy!

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