

The
Loyal

Opposition

STRUGGLING WITH THE CHURCH ON HOMOSEXUALITY

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and

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No issue more polarizes American Protestants today than the church's stance on homosexuality. A number of denominations have engaged in prolonged and divisive debates on the subject in recent years, and it appears that it will occupy their attention for some time to come. While numerous attempts have been made to change these denominations' official stance on the issue, most have failed to do so. This leaves those who favor the full inclusion of persons of gay and lesbian orientation into the life of the church with difficult choices. Should they remain within their denomination and keep silent, or should they leave it in protest? The answer, say the contributors to this book, is neither. Those whose conscience leads them to disagree with their church's official stance on this issue must continue to work for change, forming a "loyal opposition" within the denomination. The authors call for a principled and disciplined response to the official condemnations of homosexual practice, one that is serious in its commitment to the difficult process of reconciliation and forgiveness. Faithfulness to the gospel, they remind us, requires nothing less than that we be committed to the full inclusion of all persons in the Body of Christ--not least of all those who disagree with us. "The United Methodist Church is indebted to Amy DeLong and Tex Sample for this book. They have brought together the clear thinking, historical perspective, scriptural interpretation, doctrinal position, disciplinary process, and the witness of faith of some of United Methodists' most outstanding leaders and scholars." --From the foreword, by Bishop Leontine T. C. Kelly