



# Pride & Scripture

**BIBLE STUDY SESSIONS FOR  
INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS  
DURING PRIDE MONTH 2026**



by Rev. Agge Angusson of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church of Sweden

PRIDE MONTH 2026



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# INTRODUCTION

As part of its commitment to stimulating the study of the Bible and promoting theological reflection among Christian students, WSCF-E has prepared this series of Bible studies for Pride Month.

We do so in recognition of the reality that acceptance and understanding of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations remain deeply fragmented across the world. In many contexts, discrimination against LGBTQIA+ individuals is not only culturally entrenched but also reinforced by institutions, including religious communities. Gender injustice is rooted in historical biases, cultural norms, and, at times, interpretations of Scripture that have contributed to the exclusion and marginalisation of women and LGBTQIA+ people. These realities continue to result in prejudice, violence, social exclusion, mental health challenges, economic inequalities, and violations of fundamental human rights.

As a Christian student movement committed to social transformation, WSCF-E believes that the pursuit of gender justice and the dignity, rights, and full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons is not only a human rights concern but also integral to the flourishing, unity, and witness of our communities.

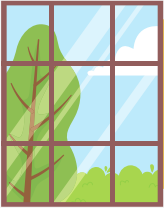
Through these Bible studies, we seek to foster biblical and theological reflection that encourages dialogue, critical engagement with Scripture, and a deeper understanding of God's call to justice, love, and affirmation. Rooted in our vision of societies characterised by mutual respect and compassion, these resources explore inclusive interpretations of Scripture and invite participants to replace exclusion and discrimination with understanding and solidarity. Drawing on WSCF's long-standing experience in advocacy, theological engagement, and creating safe spaces for dialogue, we hope these studies will serve as a bridge between tradition and contemporary realities, helping churches, student movements, and ecumenical communities embody the Gospel's call to welcome and affirm the dignity of all people.



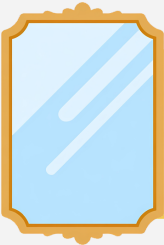
# WHY A BIBLE STUDY



Studying the Bible is at the same time a professional occupation and a calling for lay people. This holy scripture that we as Christians or as curious people have various relationships to, is a scripture that can be viewed as a **window**, as a **mirror** and as a **painting**.



**The window** approach shows interest in what the text is saying about events that occurred a long time ago and the people who lived then. We are looking through the glass and get a glimpse of the context of that time and place.



**The mirror** approach focuses on what is happening within me when I encounter the text. What effects does the text have in me and in my life?



**The painting** approach does not try to skip to the context of that time and place, or bounce back to the context of my time and place, but instead rather stay with each word – allowing each word to speak for itself and elevating each word as being enough.

All three approaches help us to understand the texts that so often differ in literary genres which results in different textual interpretation keys needed for an understanding of the text. We for example have the genres cosmogony, biography, epistles, poetry – these are all different kinds of texts, meant for different purposes and need to be studied with an understanding of said differences.

The different textual interpretation keys are therefore such as literal, allegorical, historical, biographical and reader-response interpretation.

While studying the Bible can be easier done in a group, where the collective skills of these different interpretational keys come together – we are still yet called to individually study the Bible and deepen our relationship with God.

Finally, there is a lens for those studying the Bible that already know Jesus Christ. The **Jesus-lens** or as it is also called, Christocentric hermeneutics.



**The Jesus-lens** guides the reader to always interpret the Bible text through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If any text seem to contradict the teachings of Jesus (note, not the interpretations of the teachings of Jesus made by someone random on the web) – then the process of interpreting the text must continue. Maybe another time, but since the Jesus-lens reminds us that Jesus is the fulfilment of the law, the prophecies, the covenants, the temple, the priesthood, etc. – we must apply such words of Jesus as we find in Matthew 22:37-40 supported in the epistles, for example Romans 13:10 and 1 Corinthians 13:13.

# BIBLE STUDIES IN COMMUNITY

## INTRODUCTIONS AND SETTING THE SPACE

If you are gathering as a group, take a moment to introduce yourselves. Along with your name (and pronouns, if comfortable), share briefly:

Which of the three approaches - the Window, the Mirror, or the Painting - feels most natural to you when you read scripture? Which feels like the biggest challenge?



# COMMENCING

I recommend starting your session with a short **prayer**, welcoming the presence of God. God is ever present, but we need to open our hearts and be welcoming. Start your study session with this or your own prayer:

**God,  
you are the origin of life itself.  
You accompany us on our journeys,  
you know our struggles and your love is everlasting.  
I begin this study session knowing my limitations and my strengths.  
I am who I am, I am yours.  
Guide my studies as a book light.  
Make me a humble student with a continuous  
thirst for a deepened relationship with you  
my neighbor and myself.  
Amen**

# BIBLE PASSAGES

For this Bible study session during pride month, I suggest following texts and reflections. Some text might be more challenging than others, some might be triggering. And these reactions surely derive from the established knowledge we bring into our studies as well as our previous experiences with other people interpreting these texts. Work with one passage per gathering, take your time, welcome questions, critical reflections and embrace complexity.

Should any suggested text prove to be too difficult to handle right now, I advise you to follow the lead of theologian Martin Luther:

Do not worry. Just tip your hat, honor the passage as the word of God, and pass on by. You will understand it later when the light comes. (my own paraphrasing)

# THOSE WITHOUT A GENDER

*Passage to read: Matthew 19:12 - see Appendix*

## Reflections

- ▶ Do you reflect upon different key words or different individual paragraphs when you read the text like a window, a mirror or a painting?
- ▶ Which literary genre would you think is best suited for this text?
- ▶ Which interpretational key fits the genre that you think is best suited?
  
- ▶ **What would you say if a study-buddy of yours suggested that...**
  - although it is not mentioned to a high extent throughout the Bible, this passage that tries to describe people using the wording “eunuchs who were born that way” tells us a story of a group of people that history forgotten. Dare we now proclaim it – intersex, trans and non-binary people have always been around.

WSCF Europe encourages students and Christians worldwide, as disciples of Christ, to recognise the richness and diversity of humanity in relation to gender and gender expression, and to defend those who are attacked, excluded, or marginalised because of their identity.

In a world where discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people remains widespread and where rigid understandings of gender continue to cause harm, we are called to witness to the radical inclusivity of God's love. Jesus consistently centred those whom society pushed to the margins, affirming their dignity and challenging systems of exclusion. As we reflect on this passage, we are invited to consider how our churches, communities, and movements can become places where all people are welcomed, heard, and valued.

WSCF Europe believes that engaging Scripture with openness, humility, and a commitment to justice can help us move beyond fear and prejudice towards deeper understanding and solidarity. By recognising the experiences and gifts of people of all gender identities and expressions, we participate in building communities that reflect God's vision of mutual respect, compassion, and belonging. We therefore encourage Christians to continue learning, listening, and engaging in dialogue, while actively standing alongside those whose dignity and rights are denied, so that our faith may be expressed not only in words but also in practices of affirmation, inclusion, and love.

# THE RADICAL INCLUSION

Passage to read: Acts 8:26-40

*Additional passage to know about:  
Isaiah 56:3-5, Deuteronomy 23:1*

## Reflections

- ▶ Do you reflect upon different key words or different individual paragraphs when you read the text like a window, a mirror or a painting?
- ▶ Which literary genre would you think is best suited for this text?
- ▶ Which interpretational key fits the genre that you think is best suited?
  
- ▶ **What would you say if a study-buddy of yours suggested that...**
  - The eunuch was excluded from the inner courts of the Temple as well as many other social, cultural and religious spheres, yet the Holy Spirit sends Philip to baptize – what does this tell us about boundaries of God’s kingdom?
  - The church’s answer to the question “What is to prevent me from being baptized” should always be “nothing is preventing you” and this answer should be reflected in the church space, language and culture

WSCF Europe encourages students and Christians worldwide, as disciples of Christ, to work toward ensuring that the inclusion of all God's children is not merely proclaimed but embodied in the life of our communities. The encounter between Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch reminds us that God's Spirit often moves ahead of our assumptions, challenging barriers that have been created by social norms, religious traditions, or human prejudice. While the eunuch occupied a position that placed them at the margins of full religious participation, the question that emerges from this story is not who belongs, but what prevents belonging.

As followers of Christ, we are called to examine the visible and invisible obstacles that continue to exclude people from full participation in the life of the Church and society. Inclusion requires more than welcome; it demands intentional action, attentive listening, and the creation of structures that foster safety, participation, and flourishing for all. In a world where many LGBTQIA+ people continue to experience rejection, discrimination, and exclusion, this passage challenges us to reflect on whether our communities mirror the expansive hospitality of God's kingdom.

WSCF Europe believes that the Church is at its best when it reflects the movement of the Holy Spirit toward reconciliation, justice, and community. We therefore encourage Christians to cultivate spaces where questions can be asked without fear, where differences are met with curiosity rather than suspicion, and where every person can encounter God's grace without unnecessary barriers. In doing so, we participate in the ongoing work of building communities that bear witness to the Gospel's promise that no one is beyond the reach of God's welcome.

## THE CITIES THAT BURNED

*Passage to read: Genesis 19:1-16*

*Additional passage to know about:  
Genesis 18:20-21, 22:1-12*

### Reflections

- ▶ Do you reflect upon different key words or different individual paragraphs when you read the text like a window, a mirror or a painting?
- ▶ Which literary genre would you think is best suited for this text?
- ▶ Which interpretational key fits the genre that you think is best suited?
  
- ▶ **What would you say if a study-buddy of yours suggested that...**
  - The sex requests in the text are used as a weapon. The crowd's aggressive assault on the house resembles a gang rape meant for political domination, humiliation, and power—not an expression of romantic courting technique
  - The "outcry" implies systemic injustice and non-consensual violence. Consensual relationships do not generate a collective cry of misery that reaches God.
  - Lot is recognizing the divine. Lot immediately respects the travelers' divine nature, whereas the townspeople view them merely as vulnerable outsiders to be subjugated.
  - The context of the daughter sacrifice is a loyalty test. Lot's willingness to give up his daughters reflects the absolute ancient duty to protect guests. Like Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, it serves as an extreme literary test of loyalty to God, and in both cases, God ultimately intervenes to prevent harm to the children.
  - There is a collective guilt in these two cities: The text explicitly notes that the entire male population of the city—both young and old—participated in the assault.

WSCF Europe encourages students and Christians worldwide, as disciples of Christ, to stand with the vulnerable and marginalized in the struggle against all forms of exploitation, abuse, and violence. The story of Sodom and Gomorrah is often invoked in contemporary debates about sexuality, yet the text itself confronts us with themes of power, domination, inhospitality, and collective injustice. The violence threatened against the visitors is not an expression of intimacy or relationship, but an attempt to humiliate, control, and dehumanize those perceived as outsiders. The "outcry" that reaches God points us toward the suffering of victims and the consequences of societies that allow injustice to become normalized.

This passage challenges us to consider how communities respond when the dignity and safety of individuals are threatened. Throughout Scripture, God's concern is repeatedly directed toward those who are vulnerable: the stranger, the outsider, the poor, and those subjected to violence or exclusion. The failure of Sodom is therefore not simply an individual moral failing, but a collective one. An entire community becomes complicit in systems of abuse, demonstrating how injustice can become embedded in social structures when it is left unchallenged.

In our own time, sexual violence, gender-based violence, coercion, and the abuse of power continue to affect countless lives. Movements such as #MeToo have exposed the extent to which harmful behaviours are often enabled by cultures of silence and impunity. As followers of Christ, we are called not only to condemn violence but also to create communities where survivors are heard, supported, and believed, and where accountability and prevention are taken seriously.

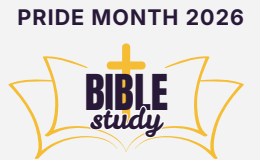
## SHARE YOUR JOURNEYS

Studying in community reminds us that we are part of a global family. We invite WSCF movements and individual students to take pictures of your study sessions—whether you are gathering in a cozy room, outdoors, or over a cup of coffee. Send your photos to [communications@wscf-europe.org](mailto:communications@wscf-europe.org) so we can feature your studies on our website and social media channels!





# SAVE THE DATE



Did some **questions** leave you **scratching your head**?

Did a particular **text spark** an **amazing conversation** you want to share?

**Join us for a live, digital meeting to ask questions, share reflections, and wrap up Pride Month together.**

**Bring:** your notes, your lingering thoughts, and your hat (in case you need to tip it to a tough passage one more time)!

**We can't wait to see you there!**

Register [here](#)

## A DIGITAL WRAP-UP WITH REV. AGGE ANGUSSON



**3 BIBLE PASSAGES TO REFLECT ON  
PRIDE MONTH.**



7 JULY 2026



18:00 CEST



ONLINE



### About Agge Angusson

“With a background in Feminist Theology focusing on how language and vocabulary can function as both inclusive and exclusive, and in Ecotheology exploring the human relationship to ourselves and the rest of creation - I now serve as a pastor in southern Sweden.

In my daily work, my theological mission is to make the Gospel accessible to all through my words, while simultaneously building God’s restorative kingdom through action. My goal is to create a community where we truly learn to see and care for the least, the marginalized, the forgotten, and the exploited.

In essence, my pastoral work is an ongoing practice of community building, aimed at ensuring that our shared space is one of radical welcome and dignity for every individual.”



# NIV BIBLE PARAGRAPHS USED

## **Gospel according to Matthew 19:12**

(Jesus replied ...) For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others - and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.

## **Acts of the Apostles 8:26-36,38-40**

'Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"

And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.'

### **Book of Isaiah 56:3-5**

'Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely exclude me from his people." And let no eunuch complain, "I am only a dry tree." For this is what the Lord says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant—to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will endure forever. '

Book of Deuteronomy 23:1

'No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the Lord. '

### **Book of Genesis 19:1-16**

'The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. "My lords," he said, "please turn aside to your servant's house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning." "No," they answered, "we will spend the night in the square." But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom—both young and old—surrounded the house. They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them." Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, "No, my friends. Don't do this wicked thing. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof." "Get out of our way," they replied. "This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We'll treat you worse than them." They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door. But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door. The two men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it." So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, "Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he was joking. With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished." When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the Lord was merciful to them. '

### **Book of Genesis 18:20-21**

'Then the Lord said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know." '

### **Book of Genesis 22:1-12**

'Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you." Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together. When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." '

# CONTACT US



## WSCF - EUROPE

### Website

[www.wscf-europe.org](http://www.wscf-europe.org)

### Email

[wscf@wscf-europe.org](mailto:wscf@wscf-europe.org)

### Instagram/TikTok

[@wscf.europe](https://www.instagram.com/wscf.europe)

### LinkedIn

WSCF-Europe