



GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
HUMAN SEXUALITY  
POSITION PAPER

POSITION-P-7  
Adopted: 3/1/2004  
Revised: 8/19/2014  
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## HUMAN SEXUALITY

As Christians, we identify ourselves first as children of God, saved by the grace of Jesus and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Then we may identify ourselves by our work or our family. But we must resist putting our identity in our sexual attractions. Instead of asking if we are gay, straight or bisexual, we ask if a person is living in purity or immorality.

God created male and female in His image, blessed them and commanded them to partner together to be fruitful and to work and care for the earth. He gave them the good gift of sex as a whole person bonding activity between husband and wife to confirm and deepen their marital relationship. Reducing sex to a pleasurable recreational activity between consenting adults as the world does perverts God's design. Any sexual expression outside this intended design, including lustfulness, pornography, cohabitation, sexual joking, and harassment of any kind, heterosexual or homosexual, is sinful. Those who claim that some forms of sexual expression outside marriage are acceptable to God are rejecting the authority of God's own Word and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. They are leading people into immorality and self-destructive choices.

Marriage is defined by God as the publicly pledged, permanent, exclusive, covenantal union of one man and one woman. Governments may define marriage differently allowing almost any kind of joining to be called marriage. These definitions cannot be authoritative in the Church. To do so would be to change God's definition of marriage and to subvert the authority of Scripture.

We distinguish attractions from activities. All people wrestle with sexual attractions and passions of all sorts. These may never change. However we are not defined by our passions nor need we live under their domination. Sinful sexual activities and attitudes, physical and lustful, heteroerotic and homoerotic, are to be brought to God and His people for help. There are degrees of sin ranging from internal fantasizing to consensual sex to rape, but all are under God's judgment. Christians call people to God's standard for sexuality, serving as agents of mercy and release from sin rather than voices of condemnation.

The Bible defines homosexual behavior as sin but no more inherently sinful than such sins as heterosexual behavior, theft, slander, or swindling. Gay marriage is just one of many legalized sinful behaviors in our culture (along with adultery, divorce, pornography). We call people and society to repent of these sins and bring our laws into the goodness of God's design as a part of our work to establish God's justice in society.



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God calls us to live our lives in partnership with Him through the atonement of Jesus Christ and the personal help of the Holy Spirit. We believe that God graciously forgives people involved in sinful sexual activity or mindset, whether heterosexual or homosexual. This happens when they repent and trust in Christ's work on the cross to pay the penalty for their sin. At that time they receive His resurrection life and the Holy Spirit who empowers the forgiven and regenerate person to direct their sexuality and live a sexually chaste life with the help of the body of Christ.

The Church strives to be a place of grace where sin of all kinds can be forgiven and healed with prayer and personal support. It is a safe space with an open, welcoming atmosphere for Christians or non-Christians who are trying to learn about and move towards Jesus. They can share and explore their stories for mutual encouragement and support as they help each other grow together into maturity in Christ. The church must accept and support people who live in freedom, forgiven of sexual sin of any kind as full members in their fellowship. People who guide their sexual passions – including same sex attraction – according to biblical standards are encouraged to serve and lead at every level in the church.

### Relevant Scriptural Passages:

**GENESIS 1:26-28** Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

**GENESIS 2:23-25** The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." <sup>24</sup> For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (cf. Genesis 13:13, 18:20-21; Isaiah 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Ezekiel 16:49-50; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 1:7)

**JUDGES 19 - 20** (Account of sexual perversion in Israel.)

**LEVITICUS 18:22** - "if a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable."

**LEVITICUS 20:13** - "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads."

**DEUTERONOMY 23:17-18** - “No Israelite man or woman is to become a temple prostitute. You must not bring the earnings of a female prostitute or of a male prostitute into the house of the Lord your God to pay any vow, because the Lord your God detests them both.” (See also 1 Kings 14:24, 15:12, 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7) An adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. (See also Matthew 19:1-12)

**MATTHEW 5:27-32** - "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'<sup>28</sup> But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.<sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.<sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.<sup>31</sup> It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'<sup>32</sup> But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.” (See also Matthew 19:1-12)

**ROMANS 1:18-19, 24-27** - “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.” “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.”

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11** - “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

**1 TIMOTHY 1:9-10** - “We also know that law is made not for good men but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers, and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine...”



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**JUDE 4, 7-8, 22-23** - “For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.” “In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings.” “Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear--hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.” (See also 2 Peter 2:6-7)

**HELPFUL RESOURCES:**

Mark A. Yarhouse, PsyD, *Homosexuality and the Christian: A Guide for Parents, Pastors, and Friends*, Bethany House Publishers, 2010

Stanley J. Grenz, *Welcoming but Not Affirming: An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality*, Westminster John Knox Press, 1998

Christopher Yuan and Angela Yuan, *Out of a Far Country: A Gay Son's Journey to God. A Broken Mother's Search for Hope*, WaterBrook Press, 2011

Wesley Hill, *Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality* Zondervan, 2010.

Sherif Girgis, Ryan T. Anderson and Robert P. George, *What Is Marriage?: Man and Woman: A Defense* Encounter Books, 2012

Stanton L. Jones, Mark A. Yarhouse *Homosexuality: The Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate*, Inter Varsity Press, 2009

R. Al Mohler, ed., *God and the Gay Christian? A Response to Matthew Vines* SBTS Press, 2014 <http://bit.ly/1po5jbl>