

A Statement of Beliefs Concerning Homosexuality and Ministering to Persons with Same Sex Attraction

1. We believe that heterosexuality is God's revealed will for humankind and that, since God is loving, a chaste and faithful expression of this divine design (whether in singleness or in the marriage relationship between one man and one woman) is the ideal to which He calls all people.
2. We believe that homosexual behavior and same-sex attraction are a result of the fall of humanity into a sinful condition that pervades every person. Whatever biological or familial roots of homosexuality may be discovered, we do not believe that these would sanction or excuse homosexual behavior, though they would deepen our compassion and patience for those who are struggling to be free from sexual temptations.
3. We believe there is hope for the person who struggles with same-sex attraction and that Jesus Christ offers a healing alternative in which the power of sin is broken and the person is freed to know and experience his or her true identity in Christ and in the fellowship of his Church. We also believe that those guilty of heterosexual sin can find healing, freedom, and forgiveness through the gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit.
4. We believe that this freedom is attained through a process which includes not only recognizing homosexual behavior as a sin but also renouncing the practice of it. Sexual holiness also comes through the rediscovery of healthy, non-erotic friendships with people of the same sex; embracing a moral sexual lifestyle; pursuing Spirit-filled counseling, discipleship, and healing prayer, and in the age to come, rising from the dead with a new body free from every sinful impulse. This process parallels the similar process of sanctification needed in dealing with heterosexual sin and temptations as well. We believe that this freedom comes first and foremost through faith in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. We believe that all persons have been created in the image of God and should be accorded human dignity. We believe therefore that hateful, fearful, unconcerned harassment of persons with same-sex attraction should be repudiated. We believe that respect for persons with same-sex attraction involves, honest, reasoned, nonviolent sharing of facts concerning the immorality and liability of homosexual behavior. On the other hand, endorsing behavior which the Bible disapproves endangers persons and dishonors God.
6. We believe that Christian churches should reach out in love and truth to minister to people touched by homosexuality, and that those who contend biblically against their own sexual temptation should be patiently assisted in their battle, not ostracized or disdained. However, the more prominent a leadership role or modeling role a person holds in a church or institution, the higher will be the expectations for God's ideal of sexual obedience and wholeness. We affirm that both heterosexual and homosexual persons should find help in the church to engage in the biblical battle against all improper sexual thoughts and behaviors.