

Bay Point Christian Church Elders' Statement on Homosexual "Marriage"

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Preface

Prior to affirming what we believe the Scriptures state about this issue, it is essential that we wholeheartedly emphasize our belief in the redemptive power of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All sin is a rebellion against the Holy God, and no sin is greater in its condemning effect than any other (James 2:10). We do not single-out homosexual practice as more wicked or evil than other sins; each category of sin, whether outwardly practiced or inwardly kept, is a rebellious affront to His holy nature and violates His stated standard for His created order.

Yet the Gospel of Jesus offers hope for sinners -- to be reborn by the Holy Spirit's regenerating cause, to be brought to sincere faith in the substitutionary work of Christ on the cross, to be genuinely repentant of the former sinful life and attitudes, to be declared righteous by God according to the just, imputed righteousness of Christ, and to be given the promise of heavenly glorification at the face of Jesus in glory (1 John 3:2)

With all *gentleness, respect, compassion, and care* we extend the Gospel of Jesus to all, knowing there are many He will call to Himself. We recognize that we also represent those whom God has saved, not by our own righteousness or merit, but alone by His grace. When we were mired in sin and under His just condemnation He saved us (Romans 5:7-11). Thus we resist any self-indignant, condescending attitudes toward sinners whom God may call and save by His grace, out of a life of rebellion and sin into an eternal existence of holiness because of Jesus' blood.

We, the elders of Bay Point Christian Church wish to simply affirm what the Bible says about this current, recurring issue in our world. We can say nothing less or more than what the Bible clearly teaches.

A Summary of Biblical Statements on the Issue of Homosexuality

- 1) Sex is a good, sacred expression within marriage between a man (husband) and a woman (wife) (Gen. 2:24; Heb 13:4, et al)
- 2) All sex outside the blessings and covenantal protective boundaries of marriage is immoral and against God's expressly stated will (1 Thess. 4:3-8)
- 3) Homosexual thinking and behavior arises in an individual because of imposed learning, abuse, or previous developmental experiences, **and** by purposed, willful human choice (Romans 1:18-32)
- 4) Homosexual temptation in itself is not sin (Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 2 Peter 2:9-10); however, homosexual behavior is sin, prohibited by God (Lev. 18:21-25; Mark 7:21-23; 1 Tim. 1:8-11)
- 5) Homosexual behavior is not who a person is in essence and being; homosexual practice is a behavior, a deed, an activity (Gen. 1:26-28; 19:4-7)
- 6) Homosexual behavior is not just an "alternative lifestyle," but ultimately (if unrepentant of) is a destructive behavior -- emotionally, mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually -- leading to eternal, just punishment (Eph. 5:3-7; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rev 21:8)

We understand that most people engaging in a continued life of homosexual practice, as well as many others in our current cultural climate (media, government, common opinion, etc.) disagree

with the statements above. We plainly set forth God's Word, and believe each person must account their lives to His standard. To make our statement clear, we disagree with these following foundational premises of those in (or sympathetic to) the homosexual "community:"

- 1) We reject the notion that individuals are born with a genetic predisposition toward same-sex attraction and behavior. In other words, individuals are not just "born that way." (see #3 above) Yet even if we concede this aspect of the issue, we recognize that all humans are born under the curse of sin (Gen 3:16-19; Ps 51:4-5; Rom. 5:12, 17). Thus even if the ravaging effects of living in a fallen world were to give someone a proclivity towards a certain behavior, we all are accountable to the truth of God's expressed Word, not base biological impulses. An aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit is self-control (Gal. 5:22-23); God always grants His grace to obey with His command to obey (1 John 2:1; 5:18)
- 2) We reject the notion of a "healthy, committed homosexual relationship." This includes the widespread contemporary notion of same-sex "marriage." (see #1 above) By clear implication, and by the vast preponderance of biblical evidence, marriage is only between a man and a woman. There exists not even one remote shred of biblical testimony of a man marrying a man, or a woman marrying a woman.
- 3) We reject the notion that once one has engaged in homosexual activity one is always and forever defined as a "homosexual." 1 Corinthians 6:6-11 clearly demonstrates that homosexuals were among the many whom God saved and delivered from destructive sinful behaviors.
- 4) We reject the notion that those who practice homosexuality should be given a defined civil right because of their choice of behavior. We will not place those who practice homosexuality in a special class of people, but seek to treat each person with respect, dignity and care, regardless of past behaviors. We seek to extend the healing ministry of Jesus to those individuals, urging them to the gracious freedom of repentance offered by God's mercy.
- 5) Within the protections of our civil government, we resist the encroachments of militant groups who practice homosexuality from intimidating our practice of free speech, right to assemble, right to worship, right to vote, as well as violate our personal and church property. We fully endeavor to respect their constitutional equal rights, desiring to engage in respectful dialogue with each individual, understanding each other – our common ground and our points of disagreement.

As an official addendum to the Bay Point Christian Church Wedding Policy:

- Bay Point Christian Church will not recognize, as legitimately married, a couple claiming to be "married" but of the same gender
- Bay Point Christian Church pastors and elders will not officiate or participate in a same-sex "wedding" ceremony, solemnization, or other similar meeting attempting to recognize a same-sex couple
- Bay Point Christian Church will not rent or lend church facilities, property, or furnishings in order to perform a "wedding service" for a same-sex couple
- Members of BPCC are encouraged not to attend or participate in a same-sex "wedding," so as not to show outward support of this chosen behavior

On Compassionate Ministry to those who have engaged in homosexual behavior:

On one hand, the issues are simple, stated above for all to read and understand. We hold to the truth of the Bible as our ultimate standard, and we will remain faithful to God's commands and precepts as long as He gives us breath. Yet on the other hand, the issues are complex and deeply heartfelt. Many believers at Bay Point Christian Church have long agonized with bringing together their thoughts about a loved one's choice of behaviors (including homosexuality) with the tenets of God's Word. There is much emotional stress and personal distress in discussing this issue. We seek to walk in the steps of our Savior Jesus. He frequently sought ways to compassionately engage those who desired to know the ways of God more clearly, yet He did not back down from proclaiming God's truth directly.

We humbly saturate our hearts in prayer and the Word that we would sincerely portray an empathetic ministry to those whom God sends us – those struggling and conflicted with the choices of sexual purity and honor before God. For those practicing homosexuality and for all sinners, we seek to maintain an earnest heart of compassion and care. We know and agonize that we too have burdening sins of which we must continually repent. We ache for the Spirit's victory from our sin, and project that same yearning for those who are trapped in their cage of sin and despair. *May this be our attitude and prayer before our heavenly Father:*

“Lord give us a heart of compassion for those You wish to save and set free! May we be Your willing vessels, eager to engage with Your love, the hurting, struggling, sinful, sad and distraught of this world. You who created us can make us whole again, by the blood of Jesus and the fullness of Your Spirit. Amen”

Some helpful resources on this topic:

What the Bible Says About Homosexuality, 2015, by Kevin deYoung

Culture Shock, chapter 4 and appendix, 2014, by Chip Ingram

Counter-Culture, chapter 7, 2014, by David Platt