

Centerpoint Church Position Paper: Homosexuality

We are all subject to weakness in many ways. This includes weakness in our sexuality. The Bible is clear that the current bodies we live in are sown in weakness.¹ Every person who has ever lived has in some manner been tempted in regard to sexual desires. These desires can be manifest in various ways, some of which the Bible is clear about being displeasing to God and destructive to mankind. Yet God is full of compassion, rich in mercy, forgiving, and fully understands the difficulties we encounter in this area.

We must always remember that God in Jesus took on human flesh and experienced firsthand the realities of our present situation. Hebrews 2:18 says, “Because He himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.”² In Christ we have someone who is able to understand the difficulties we encounter in this area.

Furthermore, in Hebrews 4:15-16, we have a word of encouragement speaking of Christ, “¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.¹⁶ Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”³ God fully understands our struggles and has a merciful disposition toward us in this regard.

While God mercifully understands firsthand our struggles in the area of sexuality and temptation, He also commands that we do struggle against sexual temptation. From very early on in the history of the Christian Church the standard was set, “²⁸ It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:²⁹ You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.”⁴

This early standard was reinforced in several letters to the early Christians dealing with difficulties in this area.⁵ In each case the standard never changed – Christians were to avoid sexual immorality and to struggle against sexual temptation. In a few places the standard was clearly defined in terms of what constitutes sexual behavior displeasing to God:

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 – “⁹ Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”⁶

1 Timothy 1:9-11 – “⁹ We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,¹⁰ for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine¹¹ that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.”⁷

¹ *The New International Version*. (2011). (1 Corinthians 15:43). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

² *The New International Version*. (2011). (Hebrews 2:18). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

³ *The New International Version*. (2011). (Hebrews 4:15–16). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁴ *The New International Version*. (2011). (Acts 15:28–29). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁵ See Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5.

⁶ *The New International Version*. (2011). (1 Corinthians 6:9–10). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁷ *The New International Version*. (2011). (1 Timothy 1:9–11). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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Romans 1:26-27 – “²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷ In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error.”⁸

It is clear that God has a standard for sexual behavior for His believing people and that this standard includes keeping our lives free from sexual immorality of all sorts. Further, the above passages define sexual activities that are displeasing to God: sexual immorality (fornication), adultery, and homosexual behavior. We are told that those who continue to live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God – that these behaviors are contrary to sound doctrine and do not conform to the gospel.

It is important to note that homosexual behavior is identified here as sexual behavior that is contrary to sound doctrine, however, it is not singled out versus other sexual sins listed. Fornication and adultery are put on equal footing with homosexual behavior in terms of activities that are displeasing to God. The Christian is to live free from all of these types of sexual behavior and not treat one as more distasteful than the others.

In light of this, Centerpoint Church affirms that God understands our deep weaknesses in the area of sexuality, yet He expects us to refrain from behavior that He has clearly stated as wrong. We are therefore called to struggle against any sexual desires that would pull us into behavior contrary to His clear will, and so we commit to walk with those who choose to struggle with us in this regard.

⁸ *The New International Version*. (2011). (Romans 1:26–27). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.