



Homosexuality

Introduction:

Because of the nature of the Gospel, at Grace Church, all are welcome. It doesn't matter what your background, gender, sexual orientation, or current circumstances are. All are sinful. All can come to Christ, just as we are, receive his merciful redemption and renewal, and begin to live as one of His followers.

We live in a deeply divided, partisan society and there is probably no issue that is dividing the church more today than homosexuality. But we need not be a deeply divided, partisan church. The Body of Christ must compassionately and wisely embrace the tension of opposing views and lifestyles, welcoming and affirming all people, while not affirming all behaviors.

We understand this is a debated issue for the church as a whole. Like never before, the Body of Christ is being challenged on what we believe the Bible says about human sexuality and how we will welcome those with opposing views and lifestyles. Therefore, we tread very carefully on the matter. And though a position paper aims to provide succinct answers to questions in clear terms, we feel that painting homosexuality (and the entire LGBT community and the complicated continuum of human sexuality and gender questions) into sharp, black-and-white terms, without the proper dialogue and study this complicated issue is due, is both unwise and potentially damaging. We ask you, the reader, to keep this in mind.

Definitions:

Homosexuality: a condition of personal identity in which a person is sexually oriented toward persons of the same sex.

Homosexual: a person who has erotic attractions for members of the same sex and who may or may not actually engage in homosexuality.

Homosexuality: explicit and overt homosexual practice.

Position:

Homosexuality is a condition of disordered sexuality that reflects the brokenness of our sinful world. Persons of same-sex attraction should not be denied community acceptance into the church solely because of their sexual orientation and should be wholeheartedly received by the church and given loving support and encouragement (just as anyone else is). Christians who are homosexual, like all Christians, are called to discipleship, holy obedience, and the use of their gifts in the cause of the kingdom. Opportunities to serve within the life of the church should be afforded to them as to heterosexual Christians.

Homosexuality (that is, explicit homosexual practice), however, is incompatible with obedience to the will of God as revealed in Scripture. The church affirms that it must exercise the same compassion for homosexuals in their sins as it exercises for all other sinners. The church should do everything in its power to help persons with homosexual orientation and give

them support toward healing and wholeness. Though Homosexuality will lead to one being excluded from serving in church leadership and teaching, they will not be excluded from the church worship Gatherings, community, and discipleship process.

For Further Reflection:

- [Jesus + The Centurion](#) (A sermon following the Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage)
- [What is Grace Church's Stance Toward LGBT Christians](#) (A short audio message)
- [Is Homosexuality a Sin? Resources to Better Understand the Issues](#) (A blog post)

About Grace Church Position Papers:

The purpose of these papers are not to provide a comprehensive study on the particular topic, rather they are succinct statements on particular issues which represent our church's belief, mission + vision, and DNA. There are many Scriptural, historical, ecclesiological, and experiential reasons behind them. Have questions? Please feel free to inquire. We welcome the dialogue.

To be wise is to be eternally curious. ~ Frederick Buechner