



Marriage, Gender and Sexuality

Introduction:

We want to start by acknowledging the reality that the following topics have been very polarizing, controversial, and a source of division among many in our day. People with opposing viewpoints on the issue have responded in hurtful and offensive ways, which brings hurt and pain to the foreground and places truth and healing in the background.

Also, because of the multi-layered and complicated nature, we ask those of you reading these positions to do so with humility, open hearts, and a desire to understand, not just be understood. It's only with a posture of extreme love that we can bring healing to hearts that have been hurt.

Our desire at Mission Church is to be people marked by our love for others. We are committed to listen to you and walk with you, regardless of any differences we may have. We exist to **help people find and follow Christ** and we invite all people into that purpose.

Though it has always been our preference to address this topic in a relational way, we also thought it would be important and respectful to lay out our position on marriage, gender and sexuality for anyone who is investigating or already a part of Mission Church.

Our Beliefs:

We believe a christian's position should only be determined by the Word of God.

The state or country you live in, whether you are male or female, young or old or regardless of which political party you identify with; none of these things should determine your view on marriage, gender and sexuality.

We believe that every person deserves to be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31). Hateful behavior or attitudes toward any individual are to be rejected and are not in agreement with the Bible or the principles of Mission Church. When it is necessary to confront behavior that is not aligned with the Bible, we will do so with truth, in a loving manner (Ephesians 4:15).

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in the Bible (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18, 7:2-15; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that



no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. For this reason, we do not perform the wedding ceremony of a man and a woman who cohabitate before marriage.

We believe that God created mankind in His own image, male and female (Genesis 1:27, 31), and has ordained marriage from the beginning to be a covenant relationship between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24). Each one, man and woman, distinctly designed to carry out God's love to the world. God-ordained marriage uniquely reflects the triune nature of God (Genesis 1:27 & 2:24) and Christ's relationship with His Church (Ephesians 5:21-33). For this reason, we believe that behaving in any manner contrary to God's design is sinful and offensive to God. This includes any form of sexual immorality, including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, polygamy, polyamorous, premarital sex, same-sex activity, bisexual activity, and use of pornography (Exodus 20:14, Leviticus 18, Matthew 5:27-30, Matthew 15:18-20, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, Hebrews 13:4). It also includes rejecting one's biological sex, medical/surgical alteration of one's physical sex, and expressing oneself as the opposite gender or as an alternative sexuality. We believe altering one's biological design pushes a person further away from God's intent for the life God designed them to live.

We humbly hold the position of a "welcoming but non-affirming" church, meaning we welcome and love all people while continuing to hold this biblical Christian view of marriage, gender and sexuality.

In closing:

Mission Church is committed to responding consistently to all forms of sexual immorality and relations outside of marriage in a manner that is gracious, appropriate, loving and helpful to individuals who desire to find and follow Jesus within our church community.

For this reason, leadership within Mission Kids, Mission Students and leading worship is prohibited to those who are openly and actively living a life contradictory to God's design for our sexual lives.

We understand that the biblical teaching on this topic may be perceived by some as outdated or even lacking compassion. However, the driving force behind our tight grip on biblical teaching is that we believe and have seen that even when we don't understand God's ways, obeying His ways will lead us into the most fulfilling and meaningful life - which is our desire for all people.

If you hold a view of marriage, gender and sexuality that aligns with our position and it only is expressed by the casting of a vote, you have not answered the call to love the marginalized people in our communities who are faced with these challenges.

Our church is committed to equipping our people to be sent to **help people find & follow**



Mission Church

Helping People Find & Follow Christ

Christ. To those of you in our church community who are passionate about helping people in the middle of marriage, gender and sexuality struggles, now is the time to answer the call to start a **Missional Community** to help this group of people find & follow Christ.

Lastly, more than helping you understand us, we want to get to know you. Our staff and leaders are available and open to having healthy conversations regarding marriage, gender and sexuality. Our primary goal is to help people find and follow Christ. As we each grow to know, love and follow Jesus, we believe we are transformed into His image.