

Grace Baptist Church
Grand Bay, Alabama
Policy Statement
Gender, Sexuality, and Marriage

Introduction

Because the modern world increasingly rejects Biblical teaching and traditional Christian beliefs regarding gender, sexuality, and marriage, the Elders and members of Grace Baptist Church (GBC) deem it necessary to establish our position on these matters by issuing this policy.

Source of Authority

The Bylaws of Grace Baptist Church clearly set forth the source of authority for the church in these terms: “The Bible alone is the ultimate standard and supreme authority by which all matters of belief and conduct are to be decided and carried out in this Church.” The Doctrinal Statement of Grace Baptist Church, which is affirmed by all its members, further defines “the Bible” as follows: “The Bible consists only of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments.”

The Bible specifically addresses the issues of gender, sexuality, and marriage. Therefore, the beliefs and practices of GBC are formed and defined by those Biblical statements.

Gender

The Bible establishes a direct and sole connection between biological sex and gender (Genesis 1:26-28; 5:1-2). This means that an individual’s gender is determined by the biological sex assigned to him or her by God, and by that alone. Accordingly, we reject any notion or suggestion that gender may be determined in any other way, including emotional, psychological, or environmental influences. We believe all forms of transgender behavior, including the anatomical alteration of an individual’s biological sex, are acts of sinful rebellion against God as Creator which elicit His judgment (Deuteronomy 23:1; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Sexuality

The Bible regularly and consistently condemns same-sex attraction and behavior as sinful and commands repentance (change) for any person involved in such attraction or behavior (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:9-10). The Biblical texts addressing homosexuality clearly and unambiguously state that it is against God’s law and is an abomination to Him. Accordingly, we affirm the validity of these texts as relevant for modern times because God does not change. What was sin in Biblical times is sin today (Malachi 3:6).

In addition, we reject all the modern arguments challenging the Biblical position against homosexuality as either Biblically uninformed or spiritually rebellious, or both.

Marriage

The Bible affirms that God's design for marriage is that it is exclusively between one man and one woman for life (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:1-9). The Bible also repeatedly affirms that marriage is the only proper context for sexual desire and behavior, and any expression of sexual desire or behavior outside of that context is sinful (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:18; 10:8; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Therefore, we reject all attempts by modern man to redefine marriage in his own terms, or to legitimize sexual immorality in terms other than those described in the Bible. Mankind, in rebellion against God, has attempted to legitimize, and even legalize, such immorality, but GBC does not, and will not, endorse or participate in such unholy rebellion.

Practical Applications of These Positions

The following statements outline the ramifications of our positions on the issues described above and give the specific policy implications of those positions:

1. No person involved in unrepentant transgender or homosexual behavior will be admitted into the membership of GBC.
2. No member of GBC who enters into unrepentant transgender or homosexual behavior will be permitted to remain a member of the church.
3. Elders may only perform marriages that comply with God's design for marriage as described above.
4. The buildings and facilities of GBC may only be used for marriage ceremonies, receptions, etc., in which the marriage complies with God's design for marriage as described above.
5. GBC will not employ any person involved in unrepentant transgender or homosexual behavior.
6. GBC will not affiliate with any other church or group of churches, or with any parachurch organization or agency, or with any missions organization or agency which does not adhere to the beliefs regarding the issues set forth in this policy.

Conclusion

It is our intention as Elders and members of GBC to be a people who adhere to and obey the commandments of God. When those commandments are contradicted by the changing mores or laws of man, our collective conscience and convictions require that we obey God.

Our choice to obey God does not in any way mean that we hate people involved in the sins described in this policy statement. To the contrary, we recognize that all sin is an affront to a holy God, including our own sin, and all have sinned and do sin. The issue is not sin. The issue is unrepentant sin and its consequences.

Because we love all people, we desire the very best for them. This can only be attained as they repent and receive the salvation God provides through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and as they obey His will for their lives.

This policy statement on Gender, Sexuality, and Marriage was adopted by the Elders of Grace Baptist Church in an Elders Meeting on July 23, 2017, and approved by the membership of the church in a binding vote held during a Special Business Meeting on August 6, 2017.

Leon F. Leonard, Elder

Craig McCarter, Elder

Paul Meredith, Elder

Eugene Conway, Secretary of Elders

Tim Woods, Chairman of Elders