

Red Rocks Church

God's Plan for Human Sexuality

Let's be clear from start, God has a perfect design for how we are meant to live.

Living life God's way is to truly live life to the fullest in a perfect relationship with him. It is how every person was designed from the beginning. The problem is that relationship was broken by sin, or mankind's attempt to do life our own way believing that we actually know better than God. The consequences of that broken relationship are what we call *the fallen nature of man*. We are born into a world of brokenness where we see the effects of sin everyday, not only in our own lives, but we see it all around us. Just watch the news and we see how devastating sin can be as we hear stories about abuse, battery, corruption, domestic violence, murder, rape, theft, forgery, perjury, embezzlement, infidelity, sickness and death.

Sometimes it can be hard to believe God ever had a perfect plan for this world, but the truth is that he does. In fact, God has had a plan since the beginning. He knew we would eventually mess things up, so he sent his one and only son Jesus to this world to show us who God is through his life and his willingness to lay his life down on a cross for our sins once and for all. God offers us life and a chance to live life his way, but we need to believe God's promises and choose life.

That life is available for anyone who does life God's way, it is the promise found in John 10:10 when Jesus says, "I have come to give you life and life to the fullest."

Sadly, many of us do not believe that God's way is best for various reasons. We battle our own fallen nature and on top of that, we deal with the consequences of that sin nature. Look at the relational baggage we carry and how we have hurt others or been hurt and we wonder if forgiveness is even possible? We are both the victims and victimizers in a broken world. There is nothing that seems to cause more personal pain, depression, hurt and confusion than the brokenness caused by living life apart from God's design when it comes to human sexuality.

The Bible has much to say about God's plan for human sexuality. Not only is Scripture clear about God's intention in creating us as sexual beings, it is equally clear that as followers of Jesus Christ we must allow the Holy Spirit to transform our minds and our desires so we conform to God's way rather than to the ways of the world (Romans 12:2).

Sexuality is basic to our humanness. The Bible says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; *male and female he created them*" (Genesis 1:27 emphasis added). Man and woman were created

specifically for each other. This is seen in a variety of ways. First, the physical design of the male and female sexual organs and the requirement of participation of both sexes in reproduction is an obvious testimony to this truth. Second, the complimentary nature of men and women on an emotional level is likewise self-evident. Third, when surveying His work, God decreed that everything he created was "good" until he came to the solitary man. When he reflected on his creation of Adam, God decreed "It is *not good* for the man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18) and so he created a woman.

From the very foundation of the world, the union of man and woman was necessary for the completion and perfection of God's creation. Finally, God's mandate to Adam to have dominion over the creation came after God presented Eve as his wife. Only in the context of his relationship with woman was man given his unique status as the caretaker over all of God's creation. More precisely, man and woman were created and commissioned by God jointly to be co-regents over all of the created order so that together they would inhabit and rule over the earth, reflecting God's image and glory.

The account of creation in Genesis continues, giving us additional insight into God's original intention for human sexuality.

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." (Genesis 2:24-25)

This passage of scripture teaches us that the wonder and excitement of sexual intimacy. Becoming one flesh is a gift from God to be celebrated and should not be a cause for guilt or shame. However, it is also clear from this passage that God intended sexual activity to occur only in the covenant relationship between husband and wife. Jesus affirmed the truth of this Biblical teaching and the importance of basing our beliefs about sexuality on the creation account when he quoted this verse in response to a question the Pharisees posed to him regarding divorce:

Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator "made them male and female" and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate. (Matthew 19: 4-6)

One of the amazing blessings that God provided for husbands and wives is the experience of intimacy that comes from sexual union. But Jesus' teaching indicates that sexual intimacy produces more than a physical effect: It is one of the principle ways that God unites a man and woman at an even deeper level. Through the temporary uniting of the flesh, the heart and soul are bound together and the two become one. Sexual union is a symbol of the deeper unity of heart

and soul that God intended for husbands and wives, and it is one of the most important means by which that unity is created. The truth revealed in this teaching of scripture and confirmed in human experience, that sexual intimacy has the power to affect men and women in a profound way. However, it is precisely because of the tremendous power associated with the sexual relationship that it must be guarded so carefully.

God-given sexual intimacy is at the heart of one of the most fulfilling and meaningful human experiences. There is great power in the gracious gift of sex. When we combine that powerful gift with the sinful nature of mankind, we can see how this good gift can be misused, perverted and misunderstood causing great harm and confusion.

Throughout scripture, God reveals the attitude and behavior that we must pursue if we want to honor him with our sexuality and experience the full measure of intimacy and pleasure that sex was intended to provide. The following passages illustrate the high value scripture places on expressing our sexuality in a way that honors and glorifies God:

"You shall not commit adultery." (Deuteronomy 5:18)

"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral." (Hebrews 13:4)

"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28)

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to the sinful nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these the wrath of God is coming." (Colossians 3:5-6)

"The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body...Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?" (1 Corinthians 6:13-15)

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity...because these are improper for God's holy people." (Ephesians 5:3)

"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God... For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy

life." (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7)

"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you? You are not your own, you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

These texts leave no doubt regarding God's desire for the sexual purity of his children. Lust, impure thoughts, viewing pornography, premarital sexual activity, homosexuality and adultery are all expressions of our sexuality that fall outside of God's original plan and are violations of his moral law. Individuals who engage in these activities rob themselves of the opportunity to experience the full richness and intimacy that the sexual relationship within marriage was intended to provide.

God designed the human sexual nature to be expressed in one way—as an expression of love and commitment between a man and a woman within the covenant of marriage.

Sexual Orientation

God's design for human sexuality as revealed in scripture is that sexual intimacy is intended to be a physical and emotional expression of love and commitment between a man and a woman within the covenant relationship of marriage.

Understanding God's perfect design for human sexuality found within scripture helps us understand with clarity, the brokenness and confusion in other misaligned expressions of sexuality. Homosexuality is not part of God's design for humanity and therefore is contrary to his will for our lives.

The Bible lists homosexual activity among the many outward consequences that arise because of humankind's rebellion against God and the broken condition of our current world.

"Because of this (Man's rebellion toward God), God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion." (Romans 1:26-27)

It is important to understand that in the verses that follow, the Bible reminds us that the rejection of God leads to envy, slander, gossip, greed, arrogance, boasting, strife, deceit, malice, disobedience, faithlessness and sexual impurity of all kinds. If we take

the Bible seriously and look honestly at our own behavior, there is ample evidence in all of our lives that we all have, without doubt, rejected God (regardless of our sexual behavior) and are all sinners desperately in need of God's free gift of grace. The take-home message is that all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God.

The second reference in the New Testament names several lifestyles, which are incompatible with life in the kingdom of God.

"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6: 9-10)

While this passage clearly points out the sinful nature of any sexual activity outside God's perfect design, it would be a tragic mistake to conclude from this passage that men and women that struggle with homosexual desires or heterosexuals that deal with lustful desires will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The same conclusion would be true of anyone struggling with thoughts of greed or the desire to slander another person cannot be saved. The point of this passage is not to provide a list of qualifications that must be met in order to gain salvation. The Bible makes the necessary qualification for salvation perfectly clear:

"If you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

God offers the gift of eternal life and a place in his family to anyone who will humbly confess their need for a savior and receive the gift of grace, which is in Jesus Christ. In fact, those that were living sexually impure lives in Corinth, turned from their sinful lives, came to Christ and lived vibrant lives in the Corinthian church.

"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11)

This is good news for anyone who wants to walk away from a life of sin and trust Christ to give anyone abundant life in him. This does not mean we don't struggle with temptation, far from it, but it means our identity is now in Christ and not in our past behaviors.

Red Rocks Church

Frequently Asked Questions about Sexuality

Question: Does Red Rocks Church welcome homosexuals, bisexuals or transgender people?

Answer: Yes. Jesus set the example for us when he welcomed anyone who was sincerely seeking God's presence and healing in their life. Jesus said, "I have come not to call those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are broken" (Matthew 9:13). The truth is that every member of the human race has failed to live up to God's standards. If Red Rocks Church only welcomed men and women who have perfectly followed God's commands, the chairs would be empty. In fact, the greatest measure of the depth of our love for Jesus Christ is the depth of our love for all people. At RRC we demonstrate our love for God by welcoming anyone who is seeking after God and by serving everyone with love and compassion as we share the good news of God's free gift of grace, which is available through Jesus Christ. RRC is a church where people can feel safe to explore God's view, his grace, and his desire for their lives and relationships.

Question: Does Red Rocks Church view homosexuality as sin?

Answer: We believe that God's creative intent for human sexuality is a beautiful expression of intimacy and oneness between a husband and wife. Our brokenness as individuals and fallen nature of man has led to a wide variety of sexual experiences that fall outside God's intent. Lust, pornography, premarital sexual activity, adultery and homosexuality are all broken expressions of our sexuality that fall outside of God's original plan and are violations of his moral law. The most unloving thing the church could do, would be to stay silent on these topics. We believe that God's way is the one and only way to live the best, most fulfilling life that God promises within his word.

Question: Can someone struggling with homosexuality receive the gift of salvation and eternal life with God after death?

Answer: Yes. The Bible teaches that our eternal destiny is determined by one thing: our relationship with Jesus Christ. "If you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9). We believe God's love and grace extends to everyone, regardless of how well they have followed his plan for sexuality. God offers the gift of His forgiving grace and eternal life to anyone who will humbly come to God, turn from their life of sin and, as best they can, live life God's way. What Jesus did on the cross, he did for all people. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but will have everlasting life." Jesus made no mention of race, economic status, gender, or types of sin struggles. The Kingdom of God is open to all who believe and receive God's gift of grace and the doors of Red Rocks Church are wide open to anyone who sincerely desires to seek and to know God.

Question: Is a monogamous, committed and loving same-sex partnership an acceptable option for Christ-followers?

Answer: The Bible's teaching leads us to conclude that any sexual activity outside the bond of marriage between husband and wife is contrary to God's moral law and is destructive. It is not an option for anyone wishing to live a life pleasing to God or to anyone who would identify themselves as a Christ follower.

Question: What does the church believe about same-sex marriage? If it is legal in some states, doesn't that make it clearly acceptable.

Answer: The real issue here is what God considers marriage. Marriage is reserved for a man and a woman according to scripture, any other form would not be considered true marriage, even if a state or a couple made that declaration.

Question: Is sexual activity outside of marriage that stops short of intercourse consistent with the biblical view of sexual purity?

Answer: No. Sexual immorality from a biblical perspective is not limited to sexual intercourse outside of marriage. Genital fondling, manual and oral sex are all examples of sexual intimacy that is intended to be experienced only within the covenant relationship of marriage.

Question: I am not married. How far can I go sexually before I have sinned in God's eyes?

Answer: The real issue here is purity in both mind and body. Purity is a matter of the heart that is reflected in our actions. So the question should not be, "How far can we go before we have crossed the line into sexual sin?" Rather the question should be, "How can I stay pure and honor God with my body?" "For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life" (1 Thessalonians 4:7).