



# CROSSROADS BIBLE CHURCH

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## **POLICY ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is a policy statement on the religious beliefs of Crossroads Bible Church of the Tri-Cities (CBC) regarding marriage and human sexuality. Our views on these issues flow from our commitment to God (Dt. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-38) and to His Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. Dt.32:45-47; Matt. 4:4), as expressed in the first two articles of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) Statement of Faith.

### **WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY**

We believe Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments teach marriage is an institution ordained by God from the foundation of the world, and intended as a lifelong union of one man and one woman. This marriage union is described in the Genesis creation account. Genesis 1:26-28 states God created man in His image, both male and female. Genesis chapter 2 provides a more detailed account of human creation. God said, *“It is not good for man to be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him.”* God created Eve, the first woman out of Adam, the first man. God did not create a second man to be Adam’s helper, or multiple women, but rather one woman. Together they were man and wife and had “no shame” (Gen. 2:25).

Jesus affirmed Genesis when He said, *“Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate’”* (Matt. 19:4-6).

Scripture grants two life-enhancing options for sexual behavior: Monogamous marital relations between one man and one woman (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-24; Matt. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:5-8; cf. Heb. 13:4) or sexual celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7; Matt. 19:12). Either is a gift from God, given as He wills for His glory and the good of those who receive and rejoice in His gift to them.

In Scripture monogamous heterosexual marriage bears a significance which goes beyond the regulation of sexual behavior, the bearing and raising of children, the formation of families, and the recognition of certain economic and legal rights. Marriage between a man and a woman is emphatically declared in Scripture to create a “one flesh” union (Gen. 2:23-24; Matt. 19:5), which in turn signifies the mystery of the union between Christ and His body, the Church (Eph. 5:22-33). This means the foundational understanding of marriage is as a covenant grounded in promises between a man and a woman which finds its divinely intended expression in the “one flesh” union of husband and wife, and between the “one flesh” union of husband, wife and God (Prov. 2:16-17; Mal. 2:14; Eph. 5:31-32).

The Scriptures have much to say about sexual behavior, from the beautiful affirmations of the Song of Songs to the clear prohibitions found throughout the Bible (e.g., Rom. 13:13-14; 1 Cor. 5:1-2; 6:9-10, 15-18; Gal. 5:16-21; 1 Thess. 4:3-8). The Apostle Paul affirms among believers



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“there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality” (Eph. 5:3). All homosexual behavior is specifically condemned as sin in both the Old and New Testaments (Gen. 19:4-11[cf. 2 Pet. 2:6-7; Jude 7]; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Judges 19:22-25; Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:8-11).

### **POLICY REGARDING MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY**

As a result of these above described religious beliefs and to maintain our consistent Christian witness, the church facility may not be used for any ceremony that in any way approves, solemnizes, or supports sexual activities<sup>1</sup> outside Christian marriage. Recognizing we all struggle with sin, CBC will provide an environment that welcomes people who struggle with sexual issues. We seek to love all people in Jesus’ name, pointing them towards Christ’s power to forgive and heal. We also recognize sexual sin is not characterized in Scripture as being more severe than other forms of sin. We must carefully distinguish between same-sex attraction, sinful lust, self-selected identification, and sexual behavior. It is not a sin to be tempted in the areas of same gender sex, pornography, or other sexual sins. Jesus himself was tempted, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). He sympathizes with our weaknesses, and he promises to provide a way of escape in every temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

### **CHURCH PRACTICES DERIVED FROM THIS POLICY**

The inspired and infallible Word of God speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. “*The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever*” (Isaiah 40:8); it is the sole and final source of all we believe.

Groups or persons requesting church facility use must affirm their beliefs and practices and planned uses are in harmony with this policy on marriage and sexuality. For purposes of faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, CBC elders<sup>2</sup> will have final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application in alignment with the EFCA Statement of Faith.

#### References:

- Scriptures taken from the New American Standard Bible, The Lockman Foundation.
- Crossroads Bible Church of the Tri-Cities Bylaws
- Evangelical Free Church of America Statement of Faith, June 2008.
- Evangelical Free Church of America Statement on Human Sexuality, May 2013.
- SOGI Handbook, Alliance Defending Freedom, 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Such activities include, but are not limited to adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pedophilia, and bestiality.

<sup>2</sup> Elders are defined in Article II of the Crossroads Bible Church of the Tri-Cities Bylaws and includes the Leadership Council described in Article II, Section 7.