

We live in an age with a wide range of questions related to gender, sexuality, and what it means to be human. While God's design for human life as shown in the Bible is clear and beautiful, engaging with these questions is complex and personal. As followers of Christ, we want to navigate these questions in a way that both embodies gospel culture (a church defined and made increasingly beautiful by the gospel) and is faithful to Scripture.

In that spirit, we recognize a growing need for open, compassionate, and truth-filled discussion around these important topics. The following is a resource for leaders, groups, and individuals to engage together with the truth as we seek God and live all of life for his glory.

SUMMARY: A BIBLICAL VIEW

God created humans as embodied beings, distinctly male and female, embedding a complementary design for gender and sexuality into the goodness of his creation. He has designed every person with purpose and intentionality to uniquely reflect his glory (Genesis 1:27,31; Psalm 139:13–16). Our gender and biological sex are not things we choose or have the freedom to redefine; both are a gift from God, established by his wisdom and grace before birth (Matthew 19:4).

Marriage is part of God's good design and is a covenant relationship between one man and one woman, in a lifelong, faithful union that displays the love of Christ for his church (Genesis 2:18–25; Ephesians 5:31–32). Any redefinition of marriage beyond this God-ordained design stands in opposition to Scripture.

God designed sexuality to be expressed exclusively within the “one-flesh” bond of marriage. Any sexual activity outside of the covenant of marriage is sin—whether adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, pornography, or any other form of sexual immorality—and distorts his good plan, leading us away from true joy and holiness (Romans 1:24–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, 18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–5).

Because of sin, our identities and our sexual desires are often distorted and disordered (see Paul's discussions in both Romans 1 and Romans 7). All of us are under sin and in need of what Jesus alone supplies! The gospel of Jesus Christ offers hope for healing and power for transformation, enabling followers of Christ to live in alignment with God's good design in every aspect of our identity and sexuality (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:7–14; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20).



GENDER AND SEXUALITY EMBRACING GOD'S GOOD DESIGN

God created humanity as embodied beings, distinctly male and female, embedding a complementary design for gender and sexuality into the goodness of his creation. Our sex, gender, and sexual expression are meant to reflect his goodness and point to his covenant love. Because of sin, our identities and sexual desires are often distorted and disordered. Through the gospel, God calls and empowers us to live faithfully in alignment with his design in every aspect of our identity and sexuality. As we joyfully embrace God's good plan, we display the wisdom and beauty of his ways to a world wrestling to find meaning, offer hope to those struggling with sexual brokenness, and reflect the holiness and love of Christ.

PASSAGES TO STUDY

Genesis 1:26-31

Genesis 2:18-25

Psalms 139:13-16

Matthew 5:27-30

Matthew 19:4-6, 10-12

Romans 1:18-32

1 Corinthians 6:9-20

1 Corinthians 7:1-40

Ephesians 5:31-32

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

Revelation 19:6-9

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1. Why is it such a controversial topic in our culture to speak of gender and sexuality as having a *fixed* design rather than being self-determined or *fluid*?
 2. How does being created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) inform our understanding of gender, identity, and sexuality?
 3. What do we learn from Genesis 1-2 about God's design for gender, marriage, and sexual intimacy?
 4. In Genesis 3 we see how the fall distorts our experience of sexuality and gender – how does Romans 1:18-32 help us further understand the impact of sin on sexual desires and behavior?

5. What do the passages from 1 Corinthians 6 and 1 Thessalonians 4 tell us about God's intent for sexual holiness?
6. What does Jesus' teaching and his own life reveal about his vision for human sexuality, marriage, and singleness? (e.g., Matthew 19:4-6, 10-12)
7. What are the implications of rooting our identity in Christ rather than sexual feelings, gender identity, or relationship status?
8. How does the gospel redeem us from sexual sin in our past, help us fight sin in the present, and give us hope for our bodies in the future? Consider what biblical passages may speak to this truth.
9. How can the church be an agent of healing, wholeness, and change for those struggling with sexual sin and/or suffering under its brokenness?