

Central Christian Church is an evangelical church, maintaining that the Bible is God's Word and our final source of authority in doctrine and practice. Scripture tells us that man was made in God's own image and that he created us male and female (Genesis 1:27-28). This male-female design was God's plan to allow mankind to fulfill his command to "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." (Genesis 1:28). God also tells us that the only permissible expression of our sexuality is within a monogamous marriage between a man and a woman. Any form of sexual activity outside of marriage is considered sin (*i.e.*, pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexuality).

Therefore, it is the position of our church that homosexuality is a sin against God but is not an unforgivable sin (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:18; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). We believe that God calls those engaged in homosexual behavior to repent of their sin and commit to celibacy. Christ said to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you; go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11). In the same way, Christ calls those engaged in homosexual sin to repent and accept Christ's love and forgiveness. Paul reminded the Corinthians that those engaged in certain behaviors, including "homosexual offenders," who refused to repent, would not inherit the Kingdom of God. But then he added, "such were some of you, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). The wonderful message to the person engaging in homosexual behavior is that through the power of Christ he or she can change. The temptation may remain, but the Holy Spirit can provide the power to remain celibate and pure.

Christians should therefore reach out to those engaged in homosexual behavior with Christ's message of love and forgiveness without endorsing the behavior. At Central we welcome those who may be struggling with homosexual behavior and extend mercy and truth to them, just as Christ has done for us. For all have sinned and fallen short of the Kingdom of God (Romans 3:23). Anyone struggling with sexual sin in his or her life needs to know that Jesus Christ offers forgiveness and access to power through the Holy Spirit to live a life of freedom and sexual purity. Central Christian Church can help with a connection to a support group and counseling to those who struggle with homosexuality and other forms of sexual sin.