

Why Grace Church Stands Where It Does on LGBT+ Matters

What we believe God says in the Bible

In today's secular culture we feel it's necessary to explain not only *what* we believe about LGBT+ matters but *why* we believe.

Question. Why does Grace Church stand so firm in its view on LGBT+ matters? Why don't all people who identify as Christians agree on matters related to LGBT+?

Answer. Our views, and our differences, are based in part on our underlying beliefs about God, the Bible, how to interpret the Bible and the nature of people.

- Our LGBT+ views are based on an understanding of what we believe God is like and his role in our existence. These views influence our attitude and relationship to God and people.
 - Some Christians describe God as all loving, meaning he is highly tolerant and even permissive. Others believe God is somewhat disinterested in people or even against people. Still others believe God is balanced in expressing genuine love along with holiness through commands about right and wrong.
 - Grace Church believes God is balanced in expressing genuine love along with holiness through commands about right and wrong.
 - Some Christians believe God created people in his image and therefore have need of him and have a responsibility to him. Others believe people came into existence largely by chance and, thus, have limited need of God or responsibility to him.
 - Grace Church believes God created people in his image and therefore have need of him and have a responsibility to him.
- Our LGBT+ views are based on our view of the Bible. These views affect the amount of influence we allow the Bible to have in our thinking, values and attitudes.
 - Some Christians believe the Bible is a record of God's truth, is accurate in all that it says and is highly relevant to all aspects of life. Others believe the Bible contains truth but it contains error as well. Some believe the Bible is mostly a collection of human ideas and has little binding authority.
 - Grace Church believes the Bible is a record of God's truth and is accurate in all that it says and is highly relevant to all aspects of life.
- Our LGBT+ views are based on our approach to interpreting the Bible. These views affect what a person believes the words and truths of the Bible mean.
 - Some Christians believe the whole Bible was given by God and interpret it according to the plain meaning of words and concepts conveyed by their grammatical construction in their historical-cultural context.
 - This is how Grace Church interprets the Bible.
 - Some 21st century Christians reinterpret what the Bible says about gay behavior and marriage. This often occurs after unsuccessful attempts to resolve sexual feelings they do not understand or want, or after a person they love comes out as gay, which leads them to seek a way to resolve relational tension or breakdown. A post-Christian secular culture and an

- affirming evangelical minority community contribute to an environment in which historic biblical teaching is re-imagined and ultimately abandoned.
- Some Christians believe only certain parts of the Bible were given by God so they must decide which parts of it are from God. They also take more liberties in deciding the meaning of the God-given parts.
 - Our LGBT+ views are based on our understanding of the nature of people. These views influence how we see ourselves and our freedoms/rights.
 - Some Christians believe that people are inherently good and are, therefore, inclined to choose and act in ways that are honorable and right. Others believe that all people have a sinful nature and are inclined to choose and act in ways that are displeasing to God and detrimental to themselves and others.
 - Grace Church believes that all people have a sinful nature and are inclined to choose and act in ways that are displeasing to God and detrimental to themselves and others.
 - Some Christians believe that people are free to think and act as they choose with little regard for the design, eternal purposes or desires of God. Others believe that people will account for their actions to God and therefore should act in accord with his design, eternal purposes and desires.
 - Grace Church believes that people will account for their actions to God and therefore should act in accord with his design, eternal purposes and desires.

Question. Why doesn't Grace Church affirm a diversity of sexualized relationships?

Answer. We want everyone to enjoy the full life and benefits that *only* come from knowing Jesus and living according to God's plan and purposes as given in the Bible. These benefits far exceed any happiness that a person hopes to get from anything else, including sexual expression.

- We believe that the Creator God made people in his image, having designed us to live in a way that is both honoring to him and best for us.
- We believe that the God who created us knows our capabilities, needs and satisfactions better than anyone.
- We believe that the Creator God made people with two distinct sexes: male and female, essentially distinguished by DNA and reproductive structures.
- We believe that interpersonal sexual expression is reserved for the one-man/one-woman marriage relationship alone.
- We believe that all people suffer the damaging effects of the original fall out of relationship with God including the loss of its accompanying blessings. Every aspect of a person's life is affected.
- We believe that the Creator God has made a way to re-establish a relationship with him, to repair in measure the damaging effects of the fall and to restore lost benefits through the sacrificial death of God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- We have experienced a restored relationship with God through repentance and faith and have come to enjoy its many benefits and satisfactions.
- We believe a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ provides the greatest satisfaction in life, exceeding even that of sexual expression.

- We feel compelled to tell others about this relationship and way of living so they too can experience the benefits in this life and in the afterlife. Though we want everyone to experience God in this way we respect the fact that people are free to choose for themselves without being pressured or judged.

Revised 12.15.21