



Baptist Churches

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Human Sexuality and the Church

- 1.1 Baptist Churches Western Australia affirm that human sexuality is a good gift from God to be exercised and enjoyed as He intended. Accordingly, we uphold the New Testament standards of faithfulness in marriage and celibacy outside marriage. We understand that 'marriage, according to the biblical pattern is a lifelong and exclusive commitment between a man and a woman, instituted by God for the benefit and enrichment of mankind and calling for mutual love, faithfulness and understanding.'¹ We believe marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual relations and that pre-marital, extra-marital and homosexual sexual acts are sinful.
- 1.2 We are deeply saddened by the tragic consequences that flow from the growing trend in our community to depart from God's standards as expressed in the Bible.
- 1.3 It is our responsibility to proclaim and teach these biblical standards within our Churches, and to promote and strengthen marriage and family life based upon Christian principles.
- 1.4 It is equally our responsibility as ambassadors of Jesus Christ to reach out in compassion to all people who are trapped in sin, with His offer of forgiveness, cleansing, and power to live an upright life - calling upon them to turn away from sin, to accept His gracious offer, and to live under His loving Lordship and in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 1.5 As Jesus accepted the woman accused of adultery, and charged her to "go and sin no more"², so we welcome all those who seek Him. As they turn away from their sin, trust in Jesus and are baptised, we accept them into membership. As they mature in the Christian faith, grow in godliness and evidence appropriate gifting, we consider them for leadership.
- 1.6 We affirm that 'those who serve as leaders in our Churches, especially Pastors, should (demonstrate) exemplary Christian behaviour in all matters, including marriage and family relationships.'³

¹ BCWA Divorce and the Ministry Policy

² John 8:11

³ BCWA Divorce and the Ministry Policy

Additional Note

Winter Assembly 1997 (26 July 1997) adopted the report of the Task Force on Human Sexuality, with Special Reference to Homosexuality and the Church. The report affirms the goodness of God's gift of human sexuality and monogamous lifelong heterosexual marriage as the appropriate context for the expression of sexual union. All people struggling with homosexual temptation need the love and support of God's people, for while temptation is not sinful in itself, the activity is. Consequently, it is inappropriate for a person without a repentant attitude in relation to their struggles, to be accepted into church membership. A person who engages in homosexual activity is not suitable as a leader in our churches. However, with repentance and faith, a homosexual person can begin to live a new life in Christ.

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