

Homosexuality

Oakwood Christian Church Position Paper

January 2016



Oakwood Christian Church is an evangelical church, maintaining that the Bible is God's Word and our final source of authority in doctrine and practice. Therefore, it is the stance of our church that homosexuality is a sin against God but is not an unforgivable sin (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:18; 1 Cor. 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 Cor. 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 give you 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. If you discover that your child is addicted to drugs, the loving thing to do is to express compassion and understanding, and to help him overcome his addiction. The same should be our attitude when we discover that a loved one is addicted to any sexual sin.

Those engaged in the homosexual lifestyle are welcomed to attend services at Oakwood Christian Church. If a person expresses a desire to commit to Christ or become a member of the church and is involved in an inappropriate sexual relationship, whether homosexuality, adultery, cohabiting without marriage, or other, he or she will be encouraged to commit to a life of sexual purity. Any person willing to make such a commitment can be baptized and accepted into membership. If an Oakwood member is found to be engaged in sexual sin, he or she is asked to repent and commit to sexual purity. Those willing to repent are guided to counseling services and support groups that are available to help them overcome their temptations. Those unwilling to repent after the steps of Matthew 18 have been taken will be asked to withdraw membership from the church.

Just as a loving parent should extend mercy and truth to a child addicted to drugs, so we believe a loving church should extend both mercy and truth to those who have been engaged in homosexuality. Anyone struggling with this area of 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 that glorifies God.