

SEXUALITY AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The aim of the following statements is to summarise the EFCC position on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex partnerships. The statements address the subject using Biblical theology and Biblical compassionate pastoral concern.

1. All of us are sinners and our only true hope for salvation is through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is so regardless of our sexuality.
2. God has a deep love and concern for all human beings, regardless of their sexuality, and desires that all human beings repent and come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved (2 Peter 3v9, 1 Timothy 2v4). We condemn unbiblical prejudice against homosexuals simply because of their homosexuality and wish to mirror God's love and concern in our own attitudes and actions.
3. God instituted marriage in which one man and one woman have an exclusive relationship for life. The state has no theological authority to redefine marriage to include same-sex partnerships. Marriage is the only form of partnership approved by God for sexual relations. Same-sex sexual relationships are incompatible with the teaching of the Bible.
4. Churches should be communities where redeemed sinners are encouraged, strengthened and helped to grow in Christian maturity and obedience. Redeemed sinners may experience many temptations of which same-sex attraction is one. A sexual relationship is not essential for a meaningful life and we therefore seek to foster positive attitudes to singleness.
5. Only those who have repented of their sin and live a life in Christian obedience may be members and leaders in the church. Any sin that is habitual or unrepented of is incompatible with church membership and leadership (1 Corinthians 6v9 to 11). However, we expect churches to welcome all (regardless of sexuality) who are currently unrepentant to services to hear the Gospel and we urge gentleness, patience and ongoing pastoral care during this process. Any who renounce their sinful lifestyle, including same-sex sexual relationships, and seek to live a new life in Christian obedience, should receive pastoral care, support and love.
6. On the basis of a commitment to obeying God's will revealed in Scripture, churches may not celebrate or bless same-sex partnerships or perform same-sex weddings.