

Marriage, Human Sexuality, & Gender Identity

Two Rivers Church believes God, as Creator, has intentionally and purposefully designed marriage and sexuality for humanity to flourish. Our understanding of these matters is rooted in the authority of Scripture, not in the shifting perspectives of culture. The Bible presents marriage as a covenantal, complementary, and committed relationship between one man and one woman for a lifetime, designed for companionship, growing in Christlikeness, and the flourishing of families and society as a whole (Genesis 1:27; 2:18, 24; Malachi 2:14; Ephesians 5:31-32).

God's Design for Marriage and Sexuality

Marriage is a sacred covenant reflecting Jesus' love for the church (Ephesians 5:25-27). It is intended to be a lifelong, monogamous union between a man and woman that embodies self-giving love and faithfulness. The sexual relationship within marriage is a good gift from God to be enjoyed within the boundaries of this covenant (Song of Solomon 4:9-12; Hebrews 13:4). Any sexual activity outside of this covenant, whether premarital, extramarital, or same-sex relationships, is contrary to God's design and leads to brokenness (Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Jesus affirmed the Genesis design for marriage and called his followers to sexual purity not only in action but in thought (Matthew 5:27-28). He set a higher standard, teaching that faithfulness in marriage involves more than avoiding physical sin; it requires purity of heart and mind. This includes rejecting pornography, lustful thoughts, and any other distortion of God's design for sexuality.

The Reality of Divorce and Redemption

God's ideal for marriage is lifelong faithfulness between a husband and wife. He hates divorce because of its devastating effects on individuals, families, and communities (Malachi 2:16). Scripture calls for fidelity in relationships, which is at the core of who we are as reestablished images of God through our new life in Christ. Covenant loyalty is the goal—just as our relationship with Jesus is meant to reflect that same kind of faithfulness.

Because of human sin, some will break the marriage covenant. God has established divorce and remarriage primarily to protect the innocent in light of the inevitable realities of a fallen world. In Scripture, we see grounds for divorce explicitly stated in both Old and New Testaments: sexual immorality (Matthew 5, 19), neglect of basic marital duties (Exodus 21:10), abandonment by an unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7), unjust/unfaithful treatment (Malachi 2). Ultimately, it's about breaking the covenant loyalty between husband and wife. We can still apply scriptural principles when the marriage covenant is broken in ways not explicitly spelled out in Scripture.

The gospel offers redemption and healing for those who have experienced the pain of divorce. Two Rivers Church is committed to walking alongside those navigating broken marriages,

encouraging reconciliation when possible, and providing grace and support for those seeking to honor God after divorce.

The Gospel and Sexual Sin

Scripture is clear that all humanity is broken by sin, and this includes distortions of human sexuality. However, Jesus came to redeem our brokenness and restore all who turn to him in faith. The gospel extends grace, forgiveness, and transformation to all, regardless of their past or present struggles (1 Corinthians 6:11). When Jesus encountered those caught in sexual sin, he offered both grace and a call to repentance (John 8:3-11). He called people into the freedom of a life transformed by the Holy Spirit.

At Two Rivers Church, we seek to embody this same embrace of both truth and grace. We affirm the authority of God's Word and call all people to live under his loving Kingship. We are committed to walking with people in the transformation process, knowing that growth in being shaped in the image of Christ is a lifelong journey empowered by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:1-4; Galatians 5:16-25).

Same-Sex Attraction and Identity

We recognize that some experience same-sex attraction as part of their story. The presence of these desires is not, in itself, sinful because temptation is not the same as sin (James 1:14-15). However, acting upon these desires in ways that contradict God's design is sin, just as with any other form of sexual immorality. The Bible does not call people to simply conform to heterosexuality but to holiness, surrendering every area of life to the transformation only Jesus can bring (Romans 12:1-2).

We affirm that all people, regardless of their struggles, are made in the image of God and are worthy of love, dignity, and respect (Genesis 1:26-27). At Two Rivers Church, we walk alongside those who experience same-sex attraction, encouraging them toward obedience to Christ and being transformed in his image. This may include a commitment to celibacy, deep friendships for accountability within the body of Christ, and ultimately finding our identity in Jesus rather than in sexual attraction (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1-5).

Gender and God's Design

At Two Rivers Church, we affirm that God, as Creator, has intentionally designed humanity as male and female, reflecting his image in complementary ways (Genesis 1:27). Gender is not a self-defined construct but a sacred part of God's good creation. While we recognize that some experience deep distress or confusion regarding their gender, we believe that true flourishing comes not from redefining ourselves but from aligning our lives with God's design and purposes. Scripture calls us to honor and steward our bodies as part of our discipleship rather than conforming to cultural pressures or personal desires (Psalm 139:13-16; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

At the same time, we approach those wrestling with gender identity with compassion and humility, recognizing that we all experience the effects of a broken world (Romans 8:20-23). The gospel is not about behavior modification but about transformation in Christ, ultimately calling everyone to find their deepest identity in Jesus rather than self-perception (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1-3). As a church, we are committed to walking alongside those who struggle with their gender identity, offering both truth and grace, trusting that God's design leads to wholeness as we live life in his kingdom.

Our Commitment as a Church

As a church family, we are committed to proclaiming the "good news" that Jesus saves and transforms all who trust in him. We stand on the authority of Scripture as our guide for all matters of faith and practice, including marriage, sexuality, and gender identity. We rely on the Holy Spirit to empower us to follow Jesus in purity and obedience, knowing we are a people set apart for God's purposes. We seek to be a relationally connected community of grace who loves people, pursues accountability, and encourages all those seeking to follow Jesus.

We affirm that every person, regardless of past struggles or temptations, is invited into God's family. At Two Rivers Church, we will continue to hold to the truth of God's Word while extending the grace of Jesus to all, trusting that there is abundant life and transformation only in him.