

Beliefs about Homosexual Behavior and Ministering to Homosexual Persons

Resolution Passed by the Baptist General Conference in Annual Meeting Estes Park, Colorado (1992)
(Converge Worldwide)

Part One

Our affirmation that the Bible is the infallible Word of God with “supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct,” and our affirmation that “a Christian should love for the glory of God” include the following six beliefs about heterosexuality and homosexuality:

1. We believe that heterosexuality is God’s revealed will for humankind and that, since God is loving, a chaste and faithful expression of this orientation (whether in singleness or in marriage) is the ideal to which God calls all people.
2. We believe that a homosexual orientation is a result of the fall of humanity into a sinful condition that pervades every person. Whatever biological or familial roots of homosexuality may be discovered, we do not believe that these would sanction or excuse homosexual behavior, though they would deepen our compassion and patience for those who are struggling to be free from sexual temptations.
3. We believe that there is hope for the person with a homosexual orientation and that Jesus Christ offers a healing alternative in which the power of sin is broken and the person is freed to know and experience his or her true identity in Christ and in the fellowship of His Church.
4. We believe that this freedom is attained through a process which includes recognizing homosexual behavior as sin, renouncing the practice of homosexual behavior, rediscovering healthy, non-erotic friendships with people of the same sex, embracing a moral sexual lifestyle, and in the age to come, rising from the dead with a new body free from every sinful impulse. This process parallels the similar process of sanctification needed in dealing with heterosexual temptations as well. We believe that this freedom comes through faith in Jesus Christ, by the power of the Spirit.
5. We believe that all persons have been created in the image of God and should be accorded human dignity. We believe therefore that hateful, fearful, unconcerned harassment of persons with a homosexual orientation should be repudiated. We believe that respect for persons with a homosexual orientation involves honest, reasoned, nonviolent sharing of facts concerning the immorality and liability of homosexual behavior. On the other hand, endorsing behavior which the Bible disapproves endangers persons and dishonors God.
6. We believe that Christian churches should reach out in love and truth to minister to people touched by homosexuality, and that those who contend Biblically against their own sexual temptation should be patiently assisted in their battle, not ostracized or disdained. However, the more prominent a leadership role or modeling role a person holds in a church or institution of the Conference, the higher will be the expectations for God’s ideal of sexual obedience and wholeness. We affirm that both heterosexual and homosexual persons should find help in the church to engage in the Biblical battle against all improper sexual thoughts and behavior.

Part Two

We further endorse the following affirmation as an implication of the previous six beliefs.

Since beliefs about the sinfulness of homosexual behavior, like beliefs about the sinfulness of lying, stealing, murder, greed, etc., are an essential part of our commitment to the supreme authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and conduct,

And since a person who believes that lying, stealing, murder, or greed are Biblically acceptable lifestyles would not and should not be deemed qualified to serve in the leadership of our Conference, or teach in its educational institutions, or serve as pastors of Baptist General Conference Churches, or as principals or teachers of all church sponsored schools, or missionaries of the Baptist General Conference,

Therefore we affirm that, in the same way, those who believe that homosexual behavior is a Biblically acceptable lifestyle are not qualified to serve in the leadership of the Conference, or to teach in its educational institutions, or to serve as pastors of Baptist General Conference Churches or as principals or teachers of all church sponsored schools, or as missionaries of the Baptist General Conference.

We further affirm that this affirmation is simply an effort to make explicit the implicit religious consensus of the Baptist General Conference concerning the meaning of Article One (The Word of God) and Article Eight (Christian Conduct) of our Affirmation of Faith, adopted in 1951.