

The Difference Between Love and Hate Speech

Selected Scriptures • Sunday, May 21, 2023

We Must...

1. Be _____

2. Be _____

3. Be _____

4. Be _____

5. Be _____

Statement on Sexuality

First Baptist Church of Arlington, Washington

At First Baptist Church, we believe and teach the following:

The Bible says that God instituted marriage to be between one man and one woman for one lifetime in a covenant of companionship where the two become one. He intends for sexual intimacy to occur solely between a man and a woman who are married to each other and insists that no sexual activity should occur outside of the boundaries of marriage (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Romans 7:2-3; Hebrews 13:4).

The Bible says that any form of sexual immorality, such as fornication, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, or any attempt to change one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God. These are not a matter of nature, but a matter of choice, and bear witness to mankind's ungrateful rebellion against God (Genesis 1:27; Leviticus 18:1-30; Matthew 5:28; Romans 1:18-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8).

The Bible says that every person has been created by God in the image of God. Therefore, everyone must be afforded kindness, compassion, love, respect, and dignity. Hateful speech as well as harassing attitudes or behaviors toward individuals are dangerous, inappropriate, and repudiated by the church. Such sinful expressions are not encouraged or endorsed by the Bible or our Statement of Faith. We also affirm that the faithful proclamation of biblical truth, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech or hateful and harassing behavior. Rather, it is a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 139:13-14; Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Corinthians 5:11-20; 1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 4:1-2).

The Bible says that God offers forgiveness and redemption to everyone who confesses and repents of their sin, including sexual sin. When one turns to Jesus in faith and turns away from their sin in repentance, they become a "new creation in Christ." God imputes the full righteousness of Christ to the believing sinner and forgives them completely. That person is then cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart (or made holy) unto God, and justified before Him. They are set free from the power of sin to love God with their whole being and to love their neighbors as themselves (Psalm 103:11-12, 130:3-4; Isaiah 43:25, 44:22; John 5:24; 8:31-32; Romans 6:12-14; 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Galatians 5:13-14; Colossians 2:13-14; Titus 2:11-12).

Adapted from Grace Community Church's *Elders Statement on Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, and Sexuality* and First Baptist Church's *Statement of Faith*.