

## **Statement on Human Sexuality and Sexual Misconduct (2018)**

### Dallas Baptist University

Dallas Baptist University holds the Bible to be the authoritative Word of God. As a result, the University is committed to upholding biblical morality in every dimension of campus life, including human sexuality and sexual misconduct. The following statement sets forth our interpretation and application of Scripture on these vital issues and will serve as a supplementary statement to the New Hampshire Confession of Faith of 1833, which codifies DBU's interpretation of Scripture on matters of faith and practice.<sup>1</sup>

### **God's plan for sexuality**

God created people as sexual beings, making the first humans as “male and female” (Genesis 1:27).<sup>2</sup> They were intended to “hold fast” to each other and “become one flesh” as husband and wife (Genesis 2:24), and God instructed them to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Genesis 1:28). God's Word consistently celebrates the gift of sexual love between a husband and wife (See Proverbs 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4), but warns Christians repeatedly to avoid “sexual immorality” (Matthew 19:9; Acts 15:20; Romans 13:13; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18-20; 1 Peter 2:11).

Thus, DBU upholds the biblical mandate that restricts sexual relations to monogamous heterosexual marriage between one biological male and one biological female. We apply this ethic to all dimensions of sexual experience including, but not limited to, non-marital heterosexual conduct, homosexuality, transgenderism, and pornography.

### **Non-marital heterosexual conduct**

Because God created sexual relations to exist in a heterosexual marriage between a husband and a wife, the seventh commandment states: “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). Likewise, Jesus restated this commandment in the Gospels, further demonstrating its abiding authority for all time (Matthew 5:27; Luke 18:20).<sup>3</sup> Throughout Scripture, this is a consistent theme calling God's people to holiness and sexual purity only within a heterosexual marital relationship (Proverbs 6:32-33; Jeremiah 29:23; Hosea 4:2; Hebrews 13:4). The biblical plan for sex and marriage is clear: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25). God's Word celebrates sex within monogamous heterosexual marriage but forbids it elsewhere.

Thus, DBU expects all faculty, staff, students, and trustees to restrict sexual activity to monogamous heterosexual marriage between one biological male and one biological female. This stance applies to intercourse as well as to other inappropriate sexual conduct, including, but not limited to, the following: sexual activity with a person other than his/her spouse; sexual activity with a person of the same sex; touching, caressing, and other physical conduct of a sexual nature that is inappropriate and inconsistent with biblical teaching; the possession or viewing of any kind of pornographic material; sexual assault; sexual violence; and other types of sexual misconduct.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In keeping with Scripture, it has been the consistent witness of the Christian church throughout the centuries to define marriage as between one man and one woman, and this is also the particular position of the Baptist General Convention of Texas as stated in its 1982 resolution on homosexuality and reaffirmed in subsequent meetings.

<sup>2</sup> All citations from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup> DBU holds to the basic principle of biblical interpretation that an Old Testament teaching which is renewed or endorsed in the New Testament retains the force of precept and principle for Christians today.

<sup>4</sup> See DBU's Student Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

## **Homosexuality**

Because God created sexual relations to exist in a heterosexual marriage between a husband and a wife, the Bible prohibits homosexual relations (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:8-11). This prohibition against homosexual activity which is stated unambiguously in the Old Testament, is renewed in the New Testament as a part of God's call to righteous living within the confines of the heterosexual marriage relationship that He created.

Thus, because of this Biblical prohibition against homosexual relations, DBU expects its faculty, staff, students, and trustees to honor this Biblical prohibition. DBU believes it has a mission to serve and educate students from a variety of belief backgrounds. While DBU students will be taught from a Christian worldview, they are not required to sign a Statement of Faith or adhere to a specific set of beliefs (an exception to this general rule is for doctoral students who, because of how they represent DBU in the community, are required to maintain certain faith commitments). However, regardless of their personal belief system, students are required to abide by the Student Code of Conduct regarding their actions. While this Student Code of Conduct does not prohibit homosexual attraction, it does prohibit homosexual activity, just as it does all sexual activity outside of a monogamous heterosexual marriage between one biological male and one biological female. Likewise, the Student Code of Conduct specifically prohibits participation in advocacy groups and/or activities that are contrary to DBU's scriptural beliefs about human sexuality.

Because of the specific Christian mission of DBU and the importance of each employee in furthering that Christ-centered mission, DBU does require its faculty and staff to affirm its Statement of Faith and this Statement on Human Sexuality and Sexual Misconduct. Just as students are prohibited from all sexual activity outside of a monogamous heterosexual marriage between one biological male and one biological female, so, too, all faculty and staff are held to this standard of biblical morality. Additionally, just as for students, employees are prohibited from participation in advocacy groups and/or activities that are contrary to DBU's scriptural beliefs about human sexuality.

## **Transgenderism**

Genesis 1:27 makes it clear that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them". Throughout the Bible, we are instructed to live a lifestyle that is consistent with our created gender in accordance with the belief that God designed each of us specially as male or female to be able to serve His Kingdom in a unique way based on that gender (Deuteronomy 22:5; see also Deuteronomy 23:1,18; 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; Matthew 19:4-5; Mark 10:6). As David noted in Psalm 139:13-14: "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (NIV).

Because of this biblical mandate, DBU believes that God intends us to live according to our inherited biological gender as male or female. Thus, DBU requires that its faculty, staff, students, and trustees live in a way that reflects this biblical standard, including, but not limited to, the following: DBU does not provide private transgender bathroom facilities and expects all students, faculty, and staff to use facilities that correspond to their inherited biological gender; likewise, students must live in the residential facility associated with their inherited biological gender; DBU also requires students who participate in athletics to compete on teams associated with their inherited biological gender; DBU prohibits cross-dressing or other expressions or actions that are deliberately discordant with inherited biological gender; and DBU prohibits participation in advocacy groups and/or activities that are contrary to DBU's scriptural beliefs about gender identity.

## Pornography

As noted above, because God created sexual relations to be expressed only in a heterosexual marriage between a husband and a wife, pornographic activity is in contravention to His created plan for sexual activity solely within the context of such a heterosexual marriage. Throughout the Bible, God calls his people to sexual purity and condemns lust (Matthew 5:28; Job 31:1; Psalm 119:37; Matthew 5:27-28; 2 Peter 2:10). Because the Bible condemns lust in all forms, DBU believes that the biblical mandate on this issue provides a prohibition against the viewing or possession of pornographic material. Within Scripture, we see that inward lust often leads to outward sins such as the act of adultery, destroying the sanctity of marriage and damaging our relationship with God. Not only does Scripture make it clear that viewing pornographic materials is a sin, but social science research has also shown that it is incredibly damaging. Viewing pornography leads to earlier onset of sexual activity, degrading views of women, an increased likelihood of violence against women, heightened levels of divorce, and a variety of other social ills.<sup>5</sup> Because of this, DBU expects all faculty, staff, students, and trustees to refrain from viewing or possessing any kind of pornographic materials.

## Conclusion

DBU believes that the biblical plan for sex and marriage is clear: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25). God’s Word celebrates sex within monogamous heterosexual marriage but forbids it elsewhere. Thus, DBU upholds the biblical mandate that restricts sexual relations to monogamous heterosexual marriage between one biological male and one biological female. We apply this ethic to all dimensions of sexual experience including, but not limited to, non-marital heterosexual conduct, homosexuality, transgenderism, and pornography.

DBU is committed to speaking truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). DBU affirms the dignity of all persons as being made in God’s image. Thus, DBU will not condone violence, abuse, or bullying of any individual. While this document specifically mentions matters relating to adultery, homosexuality, fornication, transgenderism, pornography, and other sexual misconduct, the Bible also speaks about a broad range of issues that separate humans from God’s perfect will. We recognize that we are all sinners in need of God’s grace and that God’s purpose for us is to purify and sanctify us in accordance with his will.

DBU takes great hope in Romans 5:8: “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” We rest in the truth that God’s grace covers all who believe in him and that through his grace he calls us to live lives of holiness. As Jesus stated to the woman caught in adultery in John 8:11b: “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

*Adopted by DBU Board of Trustees, September 2018*

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<sup>5</sup> E.g., Perry, S. L. & Schleifer, C. (2018). Till porn do us part? A longitudinal examination of pornography use and divorce. *Journal of Sex Research*, 55(3), 284-296; Ybarra, M. L.; Diener-West, M.; Markow, D; Leaf, P. J.; Hamburger, M., & Boxer, P. (2008). Linkages between internet and other media violence with seriously violent behavior by youth. *Pediatrics*, 122, 929-937; King, T. (2015). The moderating effects of religious commitment on the link between pornography use and negative outcomes.” (Ph.D. dissertation, Liberty University); Foubert, J. D., Brosi, M. W., and Bannon, R. S. (2011). Pornography viewing among fraternity men: Effects on bystander intervention, rape myth acceptance and behavioral intent to commit sexual assault. *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity*, 18(1), 212-231; Ybarra, M. L., Mitchell, K. J., Hamburger, M., Diener-West, M, & Leaf, J. P., Wiley-Liss, Inc. (2011). X-Rated material and perpetration of sexually aggressive behavior among children and adolescents: Is there a link? *Aggressive Behavior*. 37, 1-18.