

Utdrag av
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<https://lausanne.org/statement/the-seoul-statement>

**IV. The Human Person:
The Image of God Created and Restored**

The image of God and human sexuality

The Christian understanding of sexual identity

56. The biblical account of creation recognises that humans are created as sexual beings with clearly identifiable physical characteristics as male and female and relational characteristics as man and woman. The “sex” of an individual refers to the biological characteristics that distinguish male from female, whereas “gender” refers to the psychological, social, and cultural associations with being male or female. The Bible unambiguously affirms that human beings, both male and female, bear the image of God, representing the Creator in the care of his created earth. (Gen 1:26-28; 2:22-23)
57. We lament any distortion of sexuality. We reject the notion that individuals may determine their gender without regard to our createdness. Although biological sex and gender may be distinguished, they are inseparable. Maleness and femaleness are an inherent fact of human createdness—a fact to which cultures give expression in distinguishing between men and women. We also reject the notion of gender fluidity (the claim to fluctuating gender identity or gender expression, depending on situation and experience).
58. Throughout history, however, persons whose sex is not observably clear at birth (broadly designated today as intersex individuals) have faced significant psychological and social challenges. In the Scriptures God expresses his deep concern for eunuchs in their experience of alienation and pain, and has prepared a better future for those who put their trust in God, promising them the restoration of their dignity. In this same way, the people of God are called to respond with compassion and respect towards those who face similar circumstances today. (Isa 56:4-5)

The Christian understanding of marriage and singleness

59. The first reference to marriage in the Bible indicates that marriage is God ordained and depicts marriage as the exclusive bond of one man and one woman. This results in a new entity that the Bible refers to as “one flesh.” We affirm, therefore, that according to God’s design, marriage is a unique and exclusive covenant-relationship between one man and one woman, who commit themselves to a lifelong physical and emotional union of mutual love and sharing. (Gen 2:24; Matt 19:4-6)
60. Furthermore, the biblical teaching is consistent that covenant marriage is the only legitimate context for sexual intercourse. Sex outside the bounds of marriage is declared to be a sinful violation of the Creator’s design and intent.

61. We lament all attempts in the church to define same-sex partnerships as biblically valid marriages. We grieve that some Christian denominations and local congregations have acquiesced to the demands of culture and claim to consecrate such relationships as marriages.
62. We affirm that marriage is intended by God to serve human flourishing by providing the necessary context for the nurture of succeeding generations. Faithful marriages allow for strong bonds of family life, appropriately delimiting freedom and creating the bounded and nurturing environment that enables children to thrive.
63. The biblical vision of marriage includes the fulfilment of the Creator's mandate to procreate, and simultaneously provides companionship and pleasure for the couple. We are saddened that the pursuit of sexual freedom as a perceived personal and social good has downplayed the procreational aspect of marital sex, which has often led to the devaluing of children and the dramatic increase in abortions globally. (Gen 1:28; 2:18-25)
64. The Christian marriage is modelled on the relationship of Christ and the church, and therefore constitutes a unique means of witness to the outworking of the gospel, as the husband and wife fulfil their responsibilities to one another as disciples under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christians who choose to marry must invest the necessary effort to care for their marital relationship and for the upbringing of children who may be born to them or adopted by them. (Eph 5:22-31)
65. While marriage has been the assumed ideal for adults in all societies, and in marriage husband and wife complement each other, marriage is not an essential step to make a person complete. Both married and single persons are fully able to fulfil the Creator's will and bear witness to Jesus Christ. Each individual, created in the image of God, is a complete person with maximum potential within the context of other human relationships. The Lord Jesus, the ideal human, exemplified this truth about the life of singleness. The apostle Paul positively argued that singleness, whether circumstantial or vocational, offered the Christian unique opportunities to serve the cause of the kingdom of God in ways not possible for those who are married. (1 Cor 7:32-35)
66. We call all local churches to support both singles and married couples within the community of Christian believers through teaching, mentoring, and networks of mutual encouragement and practical support. Such a community witnesses to the power of the gospel by modelling the biblical values of deep friendships, love and faithfulness in marriage, the honouring of parents, and the dedicated nurture of children within the context of loyalty to the lordship of Jesus Christ, and to the glory of God.

The Christian understanding of same-sex sexual relations

67. Sexual intimacy between persons of the same sex is a phenomenon that is as old as human civilization, and the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, shows its awareness of such practices. On six occasions we find the explicit mention of same-sex sexual behaviour in the Bible. Because of the extraordinary importance of the subject for society and the church today, it is vital that Christians become familiar with all the references to same sex sexual intimacy in the Bible, and their meanings in context—Genesis 19:1-3; Leviticus 18:20; 20:13; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:9-11:
 - The Old Testament refers to sex between persons of the same sex in the account of Genesis 19:1-3 where the life of Abraham and his family intersected with the culture of Sodom, which God had declared to be grievously wicked. Sodom's notoriety had been due to multiple forms of social evils, including the attempted male-rape of Lot's guests by all the townsmen being highlighted in the narrative as evidence of the abysmal moral condition of the city. (Ezek 16:49-50; Gen 18:20-21; 19:1-13; Jude 7)
 - In the apostolic witness of the New Testament, same-sex behaviour is referenced in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, and 1 Timothy 1:9-11, against the backdrop of Greek and Roman culture. The historical record makes clear that sex between persons of the same sex was a well-known practice

during this period, having been normalised, especially in the upper strata of society. In this context, it is striking that Paul places sex between persons of the same sex in the same category of sexual sin as fornication and adultery, and within a broader list of sins that included thieving, greed, drunkenness, slander, and swindling. In 1 Timothy 1:9-11, the list that proscribes same-sex behaviour includes patricide, murder, fornication, slave trading, and perjury. All who do such things are called lawbreakers, rebels, ungodly, sinful, unholy, and irreligious people.

- In 1 Corinthians 6:9, Paul coined a term to describe sex between men from two references in Leviticus 18:20 and 20:13. These texts state that sex between persons of the same sex violates God's standards for the Israelites who had been bound by their covenant to God.
- When Paul refers to sex between people of the same sex in Romans 1:24-27, he does so to express how humanity's rebellion against God has led to the rejection of his created order. As indications of humanity's total moral bankruptcy, he cites the widespread practice of idol worship and sexual immorality. With regards to sexual impurity, Paul specifically condemns sex between women and sex between men, which were clearly well-known practices in what was considered the sophisticated culture of the time.

68. All the biblical references to sex between persons of the same sex lead us to the inescapable conclusion that God considers such acts as a violation of his intention for sex and a distortion of the Creator's good design, and therefore, sinful. However, the gospel assures us that those who have, by ignorance or knowingly, given into temptation and sinned, will find forgiveness and restoration of fellowship with God through confession, repentance, and trust in Christ.
69. We recognise that a number of people, both within and outside the church, experience same-sex attraction, and that for some, this is the only or dominant attraction. The biblical insistence that Christians must resist temptation and so maintain sexual holiness, in both desire and behaviour, applies equally to heterosexually attracted individuals as it does to same-sex attracted persons. We acknowledge, however, that Christians who are same-sex attracted face challenges even in Christian communities. We repent of our lack of love towards our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.
70. We urge Christian leaders and local churches to recognise within our communities the presence of believers who experience same-sex attraction, and to support them in their discipleship by pastoral care and by developing healthy communities of love and friendship.[\[2\]](#)