



# HUMAN SEXUALITY

SANTA BARBARA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Santa Barbara Community Church is a spiritual family seeking together to submit to the kingship of Jesus and to walk in the example of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> We hold as a core confession that our lives are not our own, but are lived under the lordship of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> We uphold the authority of Scripture over our lives<sup>3</sup> and seek to honor God with our whole lives, including how we steward our sexuality.<sup>4</sup>

We uphold the historic Christian understanding of the Bible's teaching on marriage and sexual expression: that marriage was instituted by God as a lifelong, one-flesh covenant union between one woman and one man<sup>5</sup>; that sex is a good gift given by our gracious Creator God to be enjoyed within that specific context; and any sexual activity outside of such a marriage violates God's design.<sup>6</sup> We believe that all people, regardless of their experience of sexual or gender identity or their sexual history, are loved by God<sup>7</sup> and created for relational intimacy. Therefore, the local church is called to extend hospitable welcome to all people in hopes that everyone might encounter the goodness of God and know the intimacy of belonging to his family.<sup>8</sup>

We recognize that some Christ followers will be called to lives of celibate singleness rather than marriage and affirm that both marriage and celibate singleness are equally valid and uniquely beautiful vocations for followers of Jesus.<sup>9</sup> We celebrate the costly and courageous discipleship of all unmarried people, whether straight or gay, who willingly set aside sexual expression in pursuit of faithfulness to Jesus and invite them equally to full participation in the life of the church.

We believe that in love and wisdom, God created man and woman equally in his image, importance, and value and that all people are given equal opportunity to participate in the work of his kingdom.<sup>10</sup> Scripture calls all believers to honor their fellow human beings as image bearers of a holy God, rather than treating them as sexual objects through lust or the use of pornography.<sup>11</sup> Recognizing that all people live with some form of brokenness and struggle in their experience of gender and sexuality, we delight in the power of God's grace to redeem every aspect of our embodied lives,<sup>12</sup> trust that God uses our human struggles for our good and his glory,<sup>13</sup> and eagerly anticipate the redemption of our bodies when heaven and earth are again made one.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 14:23-24; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 John 2:3-6

<sup>2</sup> Romans 14:7-8; 1 Corinthians 8:5-6; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

<sup>3</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Colossians 3:17

<sup>5</sup> Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18-25; Matthew 19:1-9

<sup>6</sup> Leviticus 20:10-21; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

<sup>7</sup> John 3:16-17; Romans 5:8

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 2:1-5

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 19:12; 1 Corinthians 7:7-9, 32-35

<sup>10</sup> Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25

<sup>11</sup> Job 31:1-4; Matthew 5:27-28; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7

<sup>12</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

<sup>13</sup> Romans 5:3-5, 8:28-29; Hebrews 12:1-11; James 1:2-5

<sup>14</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:42-53; Revelation 21:1-5

