

# **Human Sexuality**

## **Introduction**

Human sexuality is a profound and complex aspect of our existence, touching on questions of identity, purpose, relationship, and morality. Across history, cultures and philosophies have offered diverse interpretations of sexuality and gender. Among these, the biblical perspective has been both foundational and influential for millions, especially within the Judeo-Christian tradition. Central to this perspective is the understanding that God created human beings as male and female, each reflecting unique aspects of the divine intention for humanity. This prospective seeks to express Faith Forward Ministries' view of human sexuality as found in the Christian scriptures, focusing on the binary creation of male and female, the theological significance of this binary, and its implications for human life and flourishing.

## **Creation: Male and Female in the Image of God**

The opening chapters of Genesis provide the foundational texts for the biblical view of human sexuality. Genesis 1:26-27 states: "Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." This passage establishes the intrinsic connection between humanity's creation and the divine image. Importantly, it emphasizes that both male and female are created by God, equally bearing the divine image. There is a duality—male and female—but also a unity, as both together constitute the fullness of humanity as God intended.

Genesis 2 provides a more detailed account, describing the creation of man (Adam) from the dust of the ground and the subsequent creation of woman (Eve) from Adam's rib. This narrative highlights both the distinction and complementarity of male and female. Adam's exclamation, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," (Gen. 2:23) expresses a recognition of shared humanity and mutual belonging. The passage concludes, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24), establishing the marital union as the intended context for sexual relationship and procreation.

## **Theological Significance of Male and Female**

The binary of male and female is not arbitrary but purposeful. Biblically, it reflects the unity-in-diversity found within the Godhead. Some theologians see in the creation of two complementary sexes a reflection of relationality and love within the Trinity. Additionally, the distinction serves practical and spiritual functions:

- **Complementarity:** The differences between male and female are portrayed as designed to complement and complete one another. Genesis 2:18 observes, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his

partner.” This does not suggest inequality; rather, the Hebrew word “ezer” (helper) is also used of God and signifies strength and support.

- **Procreation and Family:** The ability to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28) requires the union of male and female. The family, as the union of a man and a woman, is presented throughout scripture as the basic unit of society and the primary context for nurturing faith and virtue.
- **Symbolism:** The relationship between male and female has deep symbolic meaning in scripture. The prophets and the New Testament writers often use the metaphor of marriage—bride and bridegroom—to describe the relationship between God and God’s people (e.g., Hosea, Ephesians 5, Revelation 21).

## **Jesus and the Affirmation of Creation**

Jesus, when questioned about divorce, affirmed the Genesis account, saying, “Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female...?” (Matthew 19:4-6). Jesus points back to the creation account as the foundation for understanding marriage, sexuality, and gender. He emphasizes the complementarity and permanence of the marital bond, rooted in the binary creation of male and female. For Jesus, this was not merely a social construct but an expression of God’s original intent.

## **Paul and the New Testament Writers**

The apostle Paul builds upon the teachings of Jesus and Genesis in his letters. In Ephesians 5:22-33, he draws a parallel between the marriage of a man and a woman and the relationship between Christ and the Church. The “mystery” of marriage, Paul writes, is that it reflects a greater spiritual reality. Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul argues that “in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God” (vv. 11-12). Here, the interdependence and equality of the sexes are affirmed, even as their distinction is maintained.

## **Human Sexuality and Moral Order**

The biblical authors consistently locate human sexuality within the framework of covenant marriage between a man and a woman. Sexual activity outside this context—whether adultery, fornication, homosexuality, or other forms of sexual immorality—is viewed as contrary to God’s design (see Leviticus 18, Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6). The rationale is not simply social or cultural but theological: the distinction and union of male and female are integral to the divine pattern for human flourishing.

Paul, in Romans 1:26-27, critiques behaviors that depart from the created order: “Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another.” While

interpretations of this passage vary, the traditional reading sees it as affirming the creation pattern of male-female relationships.

## **Challenges and Questions in Contemporary Context**

The modern era has brought forth new understandings and debates about gender, identity, and sexuality. Many now question the binary view of male and female, pointing to scientific, psychological, and social factors that complicate the picture. The existence of intersex individuals and the experience of those who identify as transgender or nonbinary are raising important questions for theology and pastoral care.

The biblical witness is consistent in presenting humanity as male and female, and it addresses questions of sexual ethics, including explicit statements regarding same-sex relationships. Within this framework, the Bible identifies marriage as a covenant union between a man and a woman and expresses that sexual intimacy is intended for this context. Therefore, traditional interpretations of scripture regard homosexual practice as contrary to the created order described in Genesis and affirmed throughout both Old and New Testaments.

Yet, it is equally important to recognize that the Bible affirms the inherent dignity and worth of every human being, reflecting the image of God in all people. This foundational truth calls followers of Christ to approach every individual with compassion and respect, including those who identify as LGBTQ+. The Christian mandate is not to shun, condemn, or marginalize, but rather to bear witness in love and humility. Authentic Christian engagement involves listening, building relationships, and extending grace.

Sharing biblical convictions about sexuality is not about judgment or coercion but about inviting all people into the transformative love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. As we hold to the biblical view that same-sex relationships fall outside God's design, the response must be shaped by a desire for genuine care, aiming to see every person experience the wholeness and healing that faith in Christ offers. This begins with honest conversation, prayerful support, and steadfast presence, rather than rejection or exclusion.

Ultimately, the calling of the Christian community is to uphold the teachings of scripture while embodying the radical inclusivity and love exemplified by Jesus. This means holding both conviction and compassion in tension—standing firm in truth yet always extending an open hand and heart. In so doing, the church reflects Christ's posture toward all: a posture marked by truth, grace, and the hope of redemption for every person, irrespective of their background or experience.

## **Conclusion**

God created humanity as male and female—equal in dignity, distinct in role, and complementary in relationship. This pattern is consistently affirmed from Genesis through the teachings of Jesus and the apostles.

In all things, Christians are called to reflect the character of Christ—marked by truth, humility, and a profound care for every person. In the ongoing conversation about gender and sexuality, may the church hold firm to both God’s design for man and woman and the call to radical love, encouraging us to find ways to bear witness to people of every walk of life.