

The Biblical View of Human Sexuality
Adopted by the General Board in 2015

Human sexuality was given by God both as a means of human reproduction and as a means to help bond a male and a female in a one-flesh union (Genesis 2:24). Because of its inherent power, God placed restrictions on human sexuality. As such the Bible presents fornication, adultery, polygamy, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, and transgenderism as improper expressions of human sexuality.

The United Pentecostal Church International will continue to uphold by teaching, preaching, and practice the biblical ideal of human sexuality and to stand against all improper expressions of human sexuality, including, but not limited to the following:

Fornication is defined as “sexual intercourse between unmarried people” and often is interpreted as sexual immorality, including all sexual sins. It is a sexual sin classified by the Bible as a work of the flesh. The Bible records, “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness . . . that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21). This principle is echoed when the Bible warns, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites . . . will inherit the kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 6:9-10). Further, the Bible notes, “Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (I Corinthians 6:13). The Bible states plainly that believers should, “because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (I Corinthians 7:2). During times of temptation the Bible teaches believers, “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body; but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body” (I Corinthians 6:18). Finally, the Bible instructs, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality” (I Thessalonians 4:3).

Adultery is defined as “a married man having sexual relations with anyone other than his wife or a married woman having sexual relations with anyone other than her husband.” God forbade His people to commit adultery (Exodus 20:14). Jesus taught, “You shall not commit adultery” (Matthew 5:27-28). Jesus gave his approval of the Old Testament commandments against adultery when He quoted the commandment in Luke 18:18-20. Adultery defiles a person (Matthew 15:19-20). God will judge adulterers (Hebrews 13:4). When an individual commits adultery he or she destroys himself or herself (Proverbs 6:32). Unless the adulterer repents and is forgiven by God, he or she shall not inherit the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 6:9).

Polygamy is defined as “marriage that includes more than two people.” Even with numerous examples of polygamy in the Old Testament, monogamy was God’s intent (Genesis 2:22-24). Jesus reinforced and emphasized the original plan in citing Genesis 2:24 in Matthew 19:3-6.

The practice of polygamy developed first in fallen humanity in the line of the murderer Cain, not the line of Seth, through the murderer Lamech (Genesis 4:23). Wherever instances of polygamy are recorded, we also see sociological disaster that created heartbreak and sowed familial discord, such as in the families of Abraham, Jacob, and David.

Homosexuality is defined as “sexual attraction and behavior between members of the same sex or gender.” God’s Word is very clear regarding homosexual behavior. In the Old Testament, God commanded His people, “You shall not lie with a male, as with a woman. It is an abomination” (Leviticus 18:22). In the New Testament, Paul wrote, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due” (Romans 1:26-27). Paul asked: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? . . . Neither fornicators, . . . nor homosexuals . . .” (I Corinthians 6:9).

Bestiality is defined as “cross-species sexual activity between human beings and animals.” The Bible condemns this act for both men and women in four different Old Testament passages: Exodus 22:19; Leviticus 18:23; Leviticus 20:15-16; and Deuteronomy 27:21. This act of perversion was punishable by death to both the human being and the animal. God designed human beings to mate with other human beings, as shown in the creation account when none of the animals were found suitable for Adam (Genesis 2:20). God created humans in His image (Genesis 1:27), and bestiality diminishes this uniqueness to that of a beast unable to distinguish the difference between right and wrong, natural from unnatural, and love from lust.

Incest is sexual activity between family members or close relatives; it is prohibited by Scripture. The first occurrence of incest is recorded in Genesis 19. Lot’s daughters, fearing they would not find husbands, conspired to make their father drink wine and then lie with him to preserve seed of their father. The result was that both of Lot’s daughters were with child by their father. The Bible classifies incest as a wicked thing, noting, “If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his guilt” (Leviticus 20:17). These sentiments can also be found in Leviticus 18:6-18. Ultimately, the Bible warns, “Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother,” and “Cursed is the one who lies with his mother in law” (Deuteronomy 27:22-23).

Transgenderism is defined as “appearing as, wishing to be considered as, or having undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex.” God’s plan for gender identification (Genesis 1:26-27) clearly defines differences between maleness and femaleness. God has a specific design for everyone at conception (Psalm 139:13-16).

Gender identification is a biological issue rather than merely self-perception. The fact that some individuals are born with evidence of mutations in their sex-determining genes does not change their value in God’s eyes or His plan any more than someone born with a mutation that causes any other developmental, physical, or emotional problem.

The Genesis account shows God’s intent as heterosexuality, with definite boundaries between sexes in both appearance and behavior. Men are to act and appear as men; women are to act and appear as women (Deuteronomy 22:5; I Corinthians 6:9).

Attempts to alter gender as in hormonal intervention or sex-reassignment surgery must be seen as a form of bodily mutilation (Leviticus 22:24-25) and an attempt to alter God’s design.

The UPCI and its constituent ministers will continue to uphold the biblical ideal of human sexuality in doctrine and example and publicly defend the beauty of human sexuality as

ordained by God and presented in His Word. At the same time the UPCI will continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, who did not come into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Him (John 3:7). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself" (II Corinthians 5:19). Likewise our mission is not condemnation but reconciliation; we implore everyone to be reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:18-20).

*All quoted Bible passages are from the New King James Version.