



## What We Believe

### DOCTRINAL BELIEFS

- ◆ We believe in the Almighty God, Yahweh, Creator of all things, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ◆ We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, the final authority for truth, doctrine, correction, and instruction in right living.
- ◆ We believe mankind is created in God's image to live in holiness and relationship with our Creator, but alienated from God because of our sin and guilt, and justly subject to God's wrath.
- ◆ We believe in Jesus Christ, born of a virgin birth, fully human and fully God, lived a sinless life but tempted in every way, who assumed the judgment due sinners by dying in our place, and was bodily raised from the dead and ascended as Savior and Lord.
- ◆ We believe in justification by God's grace to all who repent and put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- ◆ We believe in the indwelling presence and transforming power of the Holy Spirit, who gives to all believers a new life and a new calling to obedient service and a joy-filled life.
- ◆ We believe in the victorious reign and future return of Jesus Christ, who will judge all people with justice and mercy, giving over the unrepentant to eternal condemnation but receiving the redeemed, who trusted Jesus Christ as Lord, into eternal life.

### CORE BELIEFS AROUND SEXUALITY

- ◆ God created man and woman in His image, and our distinctive male and female identities and union are an essential part of His sacred plan.
- ◆ Sexuality is a good gift from God, but God intended all sexual relations to occur only between a man and woman united in marriage.
- ◆ Homosexuality (whether in practice or identity), as well as other sexual distortions and/or addictions, are against God's plan for mankind.
- ◆ True, lasting life change is possible, but requires a commitment to the process of healing and transformation.
- ◆ Same-sex attractions are not chosen, nor is there any scientific evidence to point to genetic causation.
- ◆ We do not believe there is biblical evidence to point to a specific "demonic" spirit of homosexuality, however we believe that the demonic realm may play a part in ways such as spiritual taunting, leading others astray, and leading others to harm others through various forms of abuse.
- ◆ We believe gender development, whether homosexual or heterosexual (or other variances), occurs as a part of a child's early developmental process, between healthy relating with one's own gender, starting with his or her parents then further developing or further hindered in peer relationships.
- ◆ We believe that leaving homosexuality is more about becoming a man or woman in Christ, and not merely stopping this or that behavior.
- ◆ We do not attempt to alter anyone's sexual attractions, nor do we promise that this will take place.
- ◆ We believe if an individual seeks and submits their whole life to the Lord, understanding the above, and develops healthy relationships, that they will be able to "find freedom to live in sexual and relational wholeness according to God's design."

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## Policy Statements

### **Statement on Homosexuality**

Hope for Wholeness Network is a Christian organization dedicated to equipping and uniting agencies and individuals to effectively communicate the message of freedom from homosexuality, as well as how to effectively convey support and understanding to individuals facing the reality of a homosexual loved one.

Hope for Wholeness Network upholds heterosexuality as God's creative intent for humanity, and subsequently views homosexual expression as outside of God's will. Hope for Wholeness Network cites homosexual tendencies as one of many disorders that beset fallen humanity. Choosing to resolve these tendencies through homosexual behavior, taking on a homosexual identity, and involvement in the homosexual lifestyle is considered destructive, as it distorts God's intent for the individual and is thus sinful.

Instead, Christ offers a healing alternative to those with homosexual tendencies. Hope for Wholeness Network upholds redemption for the homosexual person as the process whereby sin's power is broken, and the individual is freed to know and experience true identity as discovered in Christ and His Church.

We believe that an individual may find victory to live according to God's design, as he or she submits his or her whole life to Him. Additionally, they may choose to seek the help of ministry leaders, professional counselors, and individuals who can assist them along their journey as a follower of Christ.

Central to this redemption is Hope for Wholeness Network's desire to unite and equip the Church to carry out the healing process. Hope for Wholeness Network bridges the gap between Christians who respond to homosexual men and women with ignorance and fear, and those who uphold homosexuality as a valid, Christ-centered lifestyle. Both extremes fail to convey to the homosexual the fullness of redemption found in Christ—He who embodies grace and truth, and invites us to partake of Him.

### **Healing**

Hope for Wholeness Network affirms that reorientation of one's sexual identity and a change in attraction as possible. This "change" is not to infer or promise the development of opposite-sex attractions, however this is possible. This is a process, which begins with motivation to, and self-determination to change based upon a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We facilitate resources for this process through our affiliate ministries, other established networks, and the Church. The key outcomes of this are measured by a growing capacity to turn away from temptations, a reconciling of one's identity with Jesus Christ being transformed into His image. This enables growth towards godly heterosexuality. Hope for Wholeness Network recognizes that a lifelong and healthy marriage, as well as a godly single life, are good indicators of this transformation.

## **Same-Sex Marriage**

Hope for Wholeness Network and its affiliate memberships believe that the health of individuals, children, and our culture is intimately linked to the well-being of natural marriage and its biblical intention - a sacred, legal, and social union ordained by God to be a life-long, sexually-exclusive relationship between one man and one woman.

## **Reparative Therapy and Change**

Hope for Wholeness Network is a organization and group of individuals that seek to live lives that are consistent with the teachings of the Bible, which encompass issues surrounding our sexuality. Hope for Wholeness members choose to change their sexual behavior to align with biblical teaching on sexuality. Some may experience a shift in sexual attraction; others may not. We are motivated not by a shift in attraction, but by the desire to live a life consistent with our faith.

Hope for Wholeness Network supports an individual's right to self-determine as they address their personal struggles related to faith, sexuality, and sexual expression. As an organization, we do not subscribe to therapies that make changing of sexual attractions a main focus. The objective of Hope for Wholeness Network is to equip the Church to become the primary place where people of faith seek support, refuge, and discipleship as they make the decision to live according to Christian principles.

We believe in a "gospel-centric" view, meaning that all people, regardless of individual life struggles, can experience freedom over the power of sin through a daily relationship with Jesus Christ, a commitment to Scripture, and by being a part of a vibrant, transparent, and relational community of believers found in the local church.

## **Holding/Touch Therapy**

Hope for Wholeness Network is opposed to the therapeutic practice commonly referred to as "holding/touch therapy." Accordingly, Hope for Wholeness Network does not endorse or include in its network any individual or organization that is known to use this method.

## **The "Gay Gene" Theory**

To date, no genetic causation has been found. We believe that homosexuality is not God's intent for human sexuality. As such, we believe it is a multi-causal, developmental causation.

## **Same-Sex Parenting and Adoption**

Hope for Wholeness Network believes that the biblical design for the family and the best environment for raising a biological or adoptive child is one in which the child's mother and father are married to one another and are present in the home. While legitimate and difficult circumstances often prevent this, the intentional deprivation of a mother or father through same-sex parenting and adoption, is not in the best interest of children. As such, social policy and adoption law should be governed by a desire to ensure the health and well-being of future generations.

## **Bullying**

Hope for Wholeness Network affirms that gay-identified individuals and those who struggle with same-sex attraction are persons for whom Jesus Christ died and whom He loves equally. Therefore, we strongly oppose bullying, name-calling, and acts of aggression against any individual or group of individuals for any reason. These actions have no place in our society and we must, instead, affirm behavior that validates the personal worth and dignity God bestows upon every human being.

In addition, every individual deserves equal protection and every offender should receive equal punishment. We call upon other organizations concerned with preserving the essential equality of all individuals to exhibit impartiality in their policies, rather than singling out some for special treatment.

## **Exorcisms Used as a Means to Address Unwanted Same-Sex Attraction**

Hope for Wholeness Network does not advocate the practice of exorcism as a means of addressing same-sex attraction in an individual's life, and does not include such ministries within our network.

While we are, of course, spiritual beings and know according to Scripture that there are spiritual influences in our world today, we seek to encourage understanding towards hurting individuals in need of unwavering encouragement and compassion.

We believe same-sex attraction to be a complex issue shaped by a variety of dynamics that often includes relational brokenness. One of the greatest needs we as human beings have is to connect with one another in authentic, transparent relationships and to participate in a life-giving community. As such, we believe that we, as the Christian Church, must make a commitment to befriend and walk alongside those who struggle with this issue.

## **Grace and Eternal Security**

We are not a denominationally-focused organization, and intentionally do not take a strong stand on these two issues, because we believe that people of Biblical and Christian principals and faith should be allowed to study the scriptures for themselves to determine their own beliefs.

Hope for Wholeness Network does not promise eternal security to an unrepentant person practicing any form of sinful behavior or lifestyle, nor do we tell someone who has had a conversion experience but is unable, and quite possibly unwilling to leave sinful behavior that they will absolutely go to Hell. We believe that this is arrogant and playing God. Scripture tells us that each man or woman will be held accountable for their life before a Holy God. We believe that this is first and foremost focused on and ensured through a commitment and relationship with Jesus Christ. We encourage anyone to search the scriptures, to seek His truth, His way, and His life, without which no one can come to the Father. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). We encourage everyone to seek out a Bible believing and teaching church, and seek godly counsel to help them along their journey.

## **"Gay Christian"**

There is a growing movement of men and women, young and old, who choose to identify themselves in this way. While we do not agree with this terminology and believe that the two are contradictory in nature, we attempt to seek relationship first, second seek understanding, and if given an opportunity, aid in correction. We do not believe that it is Biblical for a person to follow Christ and pursue a sinful lifestyle or identity. Many that identify themselves in this way hold to a Biblical framework, believing that homosexuality, including sexual thoughts, is not God's plan and do not give allowance for such. They choose to use the term "gay" because they believe it is honest and communicates best to our modern society that understands "gay" as being same-sex attracted.

While we understand, we would highly discourage this, because this same world does not understand denying one's self from an inclination but would say that it is of utmost importance to "be true to who you are."

Matthew 16:24-25, "Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."

We believe that holding to a Biblical framework should follow with terminology that does not set up ones identity or inclinations towards sin as a priority or focus. We would encourage someone to rather identify themselves simply as a Christian, willing, in an intimate sharing opportunity, to share ones story and devotion to Christ along with past and current issues related to struggles and temptations.