

Kannapolis Church of Christ

The Nature of Marriage

The Kannapolis church of Christ is an autonomous congregation overseen by a group of elders who have been selected and appointed by the church. The elders oversee the congregation under the ultimate authority of God that has been mediated to the church through Jesus, the apostles and inspired Scripture (the Bible). The following statement concerning the nature of marriage is based on the teaching of Scripture.

The biblical view of marriage is grounded in the creation accounts of Genesis 1-2. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.' . . . Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called "woman," for she was taken out of the man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and they will become one flesh" (Genesis 2:18-24).

Jesus affirmed his view of marriage by referring to these creation accounts. "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matthew 19:4-6).

Ethical instruction in the New Testament letters recognizes that marriage is the union of a man (male/Husband) and a woman (female/wife). "Each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband" (1 Corinthians 7:2). "Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them" (Colossians 3:18-19; cf. Ephesians 5:22-30; 1 Peter 3:1-7). As in the case of Jesus, this apostolic perspective on marriage is grounded in the creation narrative. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife; and the two will become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:31).

The sexual desires of male and female are to be fulfilled with God's approval in the context of the marriage of a man and a woman. The sexual implication of the creation narrative ("the two will become one flesh") is assumed in the apostolic instruction. "The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife" (1 Corinthians 7:4).

According to Scripture, God does not approve the compromise of the male-female sexual relationship that is inherent in biblical marriage by sexual practice between individuals of the same gender. "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable" (Leviticus 18:22; cf. Leviticus 20:13). "Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Such same-sex practice among both males and females reflects a disregard for God's

purposes that are inherent in the creation accounts of Genesis 1-2. “Because of this God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion” (Romans 1:26-27).

Same-sex practice is not the only action that is contrary to God’s purposes (Romans 1:26-31). It is, however, among those attitudes and actions the leadership of the Kannapolis church cannot approve. “Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:31).

It is for the reasons outlined above that the Kannapolis church of Christ affirms that marriage is the union of a man and a woman, not the union of two individuals of the same gender.