



## **Our Position on Homosexual Marriage**

In light of the current publicity and resulting confusion about churches which are affirming homosexuals in their sexual behavior, performing gay weddings, and seeking to be more inclusive in their membership and leadership, we feel that it is important to explain our position on the matter.

The core of life at Montage Bible Church is the authoritative, inerrant Word of God (II Tim.3:16-17). It is the foundation of our teaching, our behavior, our mission, our outreach, our worship – everything. Scripture is not some lifeless set of words on paper; it is truth on fire. It is the verbal (in words) revelation of the living God (II Pet.1:19-21), telling us what God is like, what He has done, is doing, and will do. It is sharp as a two-edged sword, separating truth from error (Heb. 4:12). It is a living Word which the Holy Spirit uses, not only to bring salvation to those who place their faith in its message (Jms.1:21), but to mold their thinking, change their values, re-direct their behavior, and form within them the image and character of Jesus. It encompasses history, doctrine, worship, and Christian experience. It is, in fact, so much a revelation of God's character and His will that Jesus is called "the Word" (Jn.1:1, 14).

It is the Word of God that tells us about His love, as well as His justice and holiness. It is the Word which tells us about the sacrifice of Jesus for our salvation, about how to have new life in Him by believing in Him, about the coming Kingdom and our future in Heaven, and also . . . about sin (Ps.119:9).

While there are surely a few passages in the Bible which can be difficult to understand and interpret confidently, the prohibitions against homosexuality are not. They can only be "misunderstood" if one is trying to justify his or her own viewpoint. Those who do this like to say that the Bible doesn't even address the homosexual "union" of two people who are committed to one another in love. They often say that the Bible's condemnation of same sex behavior is only addressing lustful behavior or inhospitality, not committed love. Others say that the Bible is only condemning homosexuality in the context of idolatry. Some even claim that homosexual relationships are acceptable as long as there is fidelity between the partners (i.e., gay marriage). None of these claims hold up to their contexts, nor to a valid hermeneutic (way of interpreting Scripture), nor even to common sense. The Bible condemns homosexual behavior unequivocally (Gen.19:1-13; Rom.1:26-27; I Tim.1:10). It is sin, along with adultery, lust, lying, jealousy, gossip, and a host of other sins. It is considered sin in the Old Testament, and it is considered sin in the New Testament. It is sin in the culture that doesn't know God, and it is sin in the church.

Montage Bible Church does not affirm sin, nor will we facilitate it. Montage believes what the Bible teaches. We affirm that it is more important to be B.C. (biblically correct) than it is to appear P.C. (politically correct). The leadership of Montage will not reinterpret God's Word to try to make it more politically correct or culturally acceptable (a culture Jesus said is walking in darkness and running towards sin, Mt.5:13-16; Jn.3:17-21). We will not change until God's Word changes, which is never (Is.40:8). If Montage were to change its position on the subject, we would no longer exist as a church that is faithful to God and obedient to the Bible that He inspired. Put simply, we will not put culture before Christ.

It is not for us to judge those who are practicing homosexuals (I Cor.5:12). It is our job to love them with the love of Christ, present the Gospel to them, and pray that they might come to receive Jesus as their Savior. We can welcome them to our church without affirming their lifestyle.

It is also not for us to judge those who innocently attend compromising (welcoming and affirming) churches, though it would be wise for them to reevaluate the leadership they are placing themselves under as well as to have a better understanding of Biblical love and tolerance, rather than what the world's definitions of those things are.

The same Bible which names homosexual behavior as God-defying sin also has strong words of condemnation for under-shepherds (pastors) of God's people who lead them astray (Lam.2:14; II Pet.2). We call on such pastors either to repent of their willful defiance of God's Word and re-examine their faulty hermeneutic and instruct their people in the truth, or else leave their "ministries". It's time to insist that Christians, and especially their leaders, either step up to the plate and humbly assent to God's Word rather than a shifting culture, or come right out and say they don't believe Scripture is authoritative. The judgment of God awaits all of us who seek to teach and lead God's people (Prov.28:10; Mal.2:7-9; Jms.3:1), and faithfulness to the plain teaching of the Word of God is absolutely essential.