

REDEEMER

CHURCH • FOLKESTONE

Ethical Statements

In addition to our Core Beliefs and Doctrinal Distinctives, the elders of Redeemer Church Folkestone believe the following Ethical Statements accurately represent the teaching of the Bible. All the members of Redeemer Church seek to live in line with the Bible's teaching in these areas.

Marriage & The Family

Marriage is a God-given covenant whereby a man and a woman may enjoy lifelong intimacy and mutual support. Marriage is, by definition, heterosexual and is a relationship that cannot be redefined. It is the lifelong, public and exclusive union between one man and one woman.

Our convictions about the issue of same sex marriage are explained in more detail in the FIEC statement 'Same Sex Marriage' to which all FIEC churches subscribe.

In marriage, husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in his image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people and is intended to serve as a picture of the union between Christ and his Church. In Christian marriage, a husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. The husband accepts the God-given responsibility to provide for, protect, serve, and lead his family with sacrificial love. The wife responds in godly submission and respect to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the loving headship of Christ.

God has ordained the family unit as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of people related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. In a family, husband and wife are to work hard to nurture their lifelong commitment. Any children God may give are, from the moment of conception, a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Children are primarily the responsibility of their parents. Christian parents are to love their children and to teach them the gospel and biblical values; and through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Children are to honour and obey their parents.

The gospel speaks into the lives of broken people, which includes each one of us. In this broken world, broken families are a reality, and the gospel offers hope, healing, and help to every individual and every broken family.

We also recognise and embrace the fact that God has called some people to singleness, and that being single is in no way inferior to being married.

Divorce & Remarriage

Divorce is always tragic in God's eyes. It is a departure from God's purpose in marriage and always involves sin. At the same time, the Scriptures speak compassionately into the realities of this broken world and there are circumstances in which divorce is permitted as a last resort, especially

where there is no repentance and reconciliation proves impossible: In cases of adultery, abandonment by an unbelieving spouse, or abuse. Where divorce is legitimate on biblical grounds, the innocent party would be free to remarry.

Sex & Sexuality

Sexual intimacy is a gift from God to be enjoyed exclusively within the context of marriage. Such intimacy in any other context (whether between a man and a woman who are not married or between people of the same gender) is sinful and displeasing to God. As with all other sin, in the absence of repentance, this brings with it the prospect of certain judgment, regardless of whether the relationship is long-term and stable. At Redeemer Church we will not promote expression of sexuality outside heterosexual marriage.

The Bible is clear that we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; and just as with any other sin, God graciously forgives all who have fallen short in this area who turn to Christ in repentance and faith; and he enables them to begin to live in a manner pleasing to Him. At Redeemer Church we seek to exercise care, kindness and compassion towards those who struggle with sexual temptation and same-sex attraction; and will always seek to make clear the forgiveness, grace and help that extend to all repentant sinners – including those for whom sexual sin has formed a major part of their life.

Gender

God created each one of us either male or female. Our true gender identity is inseparable from our biological sex determined at conception. Our gender may not be changed or reassigned. We recognise that some people do experience gender dysphoria and so we believe it is important to speak with both compassion and clarity on this issue.

The Gospel & Social Justice

The impact of Christianity on society is huge, and can be seen in areas such as medicine, education, charity, politics and assumed moral values. On a smaller scale, a Christian simply living out their faith in the world has a significant impact on others. Historically, significant cultural change in a godly direction has only come about as the fruit of the gospel changing individual lives. When the gospel takes root in our lives it transforms us as individuals and has a transformative effect on our families, work, communities, and society more widely.

The gospel has significant social implications. Whilst it would not be possible for any Christian or church to actively engage with every issue of social justice; as Christians we should long for justice and that the will of Christ be supreme in every area of life. Christians should oppose racism, since every person of every race possesses full dignity and is equally worthy of respect and honour. We should oppose every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery and pornography. We should desire an end to human trafficking, modern slavery, domestic violence, and all forms of abuse. We should stand with our brothers and sisters who are persecuted for their faith in Christ. We should have care and concern for the most vulnerable in society and compassion towards those living in poverty across the world. As Christians we should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. We should extend love, care, kindness and compassion towards those who have, in one way or another, been touched by the tragedy of abortion; and should want to help those who cannot see a way forward in continuing with their pregnancy.