

Milligan College
A Statement Concerning Human Sexuality

The Christian scriptures portray human sexuality as a gift from God intended to be expressed within the context of chastity in singleness or covenant marriage. The totality of the biblical witness sets forth four criteria for the marriage covenant.

1. The Bible portrays faithful monogamy as the model for marriage. In Gen. 2:24, God created persons as male and female, and the text advocates that the two become “one flesh.” Jesus employs this same image in describing marriage (Mark 10:8; Matt. 19:1-5). The Book of Ephesians compares the relationship between a husband and wife to the love that Christ has for the Church (5:23-31).
2. The ideal Christian marriage is permanent. God desires marriage to be a lifetime commitment, and human failure to achieve that goal is never part of God’s ideal for marriage (Mark 10:9; Matt. 19:6).
3. Biblical marriage is heterosexual. Both the Old and New Testaments prohibit homosexual activity (Lev. 18:22; 20:10-16; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:9-11).
4. God’s aim for marriage is that it be characterized by the self-giving love that Christ showed in his sacrificial death on behalf of the Church (Eph. 5:23-31).

Milligan recognizes that all persons are created in the image of God and that God desires that we reflect God’s image in our thoughts, words, and behavior. God also designated the sexual binary of male and female as part of what it means to be created in God’s image (Gen. 1:27). God desires that we reflect the divine image within the context of the sex with which we were biologically born.

We are persons for whom Christ died and who possess the potential to glorify God within the context of our sexual being. We achieve such potential only by submitting ourselves to the teaching of the scriptures, aided by the guidance and support of a faith community, and subject to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

However, we also acknowledge that we are all sinners who have fallen short of God’s desires for us. This sinfulness leads to estrangement and brokenness in every aspect of our being, including our sexual being. Only by choosing to accept the redemptive power of Christ are we able to move beyond this brokenness. Milligan College expects and challenges all members of its community to fulfill God’s intention for appropriate sexual expression. The College provides appropriate guidance and support in encouraging persons to achieve this ideal, considering all circumstances relevant to a particular situation and responding in a manner that is most consistent with its mission as a Christian institution. This response will reflect our commitment to maintaining an environment that reflects both the Bible’s model for appropriate sexual expression as well as the grace and forgiveness that God has shown us in Christ.

By joining the Milligan community, we covenant with each other to demonstrate faithfulness to the scriptures in our personal behavior as well as forbearance toward one another as fellow disciples of Jesus Christ. We recognize that not all members of the Milligan community will agree with every aspect of our understanding of human sexuality. We welcome respectful dialogue and careful discernment as we work together to nurture a Milligan community that values both the authority of scripture and the needs of persons.

Approved by the Milligan College Board of Trustees – October 23, 2015