



# Marriage Statement

## The Issue

*Our culture has witnessed a steady dissolution of the Biblical view of marriage. This same thing has happened in the church and is a result, in part, of a lack of Biblical awareness of the theology and purpose of marriage. The consequence is that the divorce rate within the church is equal with that of the world.<sup>1</sup> Now, even the very definition of marriage is being debated by our society. It is critical for our church to fully understand God's design for marriage and to implement strategies to nurture healthy, Biblical marriages at BCC.*

### *The Biblical Teaching*

*God's plan for marriage is an exclusive, life-long covenant between a man and a woman, establishing a mutually supportive relationship. Marriage provides the framework for relational intimacy, sexual fulfillment, and raising children. Marriage reflects God's love for His church.*

*1. We believe marriage is a spiritually, emotionally and physically fulfilling union created by God (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16) and legally recognized by the state. We know that couples will encounter many challenges that test marriage. (1 Cor. 7:28). We recognize that the combined offerings of exhortation, supportive church programs, and counsel from mature couples and counseling agencies will go far in supporting marriages. (Titus 2:1-8).*

*2. We believe marriage is an exclusive, life-long covenant entered into through a ceremony where the relationship is ratified by a recognized authority. Marriage is an earthly relationship meant to last until the couple is separated by death. (Mt. 19:6; 22:30; 1 Cor. 7:39). Divorce is hated by God (Mal. 2:16) and leads to much pain and dysfunction in families.*

*3. We believe marriage is meant to be the union of a single man and a single woman (1 Cor. 7:2). The Bible forbids the practice of homosexuality and with it the union of same-sex marriages. (Rom. 1:22-27).*

*4. We believe our church should create an environment where both husband and wife seek to help each other grow to full spiritual maturity. The husband is charged to serve and sacrifice for his wife. (Eph. 5:28-30). The wife is to nurture the husband's leadership in the family. (Eph. 5: 18-23). This relationship is based on love and respect with both*

*husband and wife submitting to one another out of reverence to Christ. (Eph. 5:21). Although men and women differ in their God-given roles, we affirm they possess equal worth before God. (Gal.3:28).*

*5. We believe that marriage provides the framework for relational intimacy and oneness. (Gen. 2:18). This is best achieved when both husband and wife are believers. (2 Cor. 6:14).*

*6. We believe that sexual fulfillment should only be found in the context of marriage. God's plan is for sexual fulfillment to take place in the security of the marriage relationship. (Gen. 2:24; Heb.13:4). The gift of sex is to be reserved solely for one's spouse. Sexual activity outside of marriage is sin. The willingness to wait until marriage is a sign of self-control and respect. (1 Cor. 7:1-2, 8-9; Eph. 5:3; 1 Thess. 4:3-8).*

*7. We believe that Godly marriage provides the best environment for the raising of children. Children are a gift from God (Ps. 127:3) and are part of the Biblical charge to Adam and Eve. (Gen. 1:28). They mature best in a home where both father and mother take an active role in their development. (Eph. 6:4). We also believe that when the husband-wife relationship is given priority, couples are able to fulfill their role as parents more effectively.*

*8. We believe that marriage reflects God's love for His church and is symbolic of the deep devotion God possesses for His people. (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:6-9).*

### *Conclusions*

*1. As a church we will teach the Biblical plan for marriage.*

*2. As leadership we will use the information from this statement to recommend ways for BCC to help couples better prepare for marriage, to better equip new marriages, to build stronger marriages, and to help heal broken marriages.*

*3. Before divorce is considered, we want BCC to be a church where every measure is encouraged to restore the marriage. If a marriage does end in divorce, BCC desires to mediate and minimize the negative effects of the divorce.*

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*1 "Born Again Christians Just As Likely to Divorce As Are Non-Christians," The Barna Update, September 8, 2004, The Barna Group at [www.barna.org](http://www.barna.org)*