

# Song of Songs 3:6-5:1

ESV

<sup>6</sup> What is that coming up from the wilderness  
like columns of smoke,  
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,  
with all the fragrant powders of a merchant?

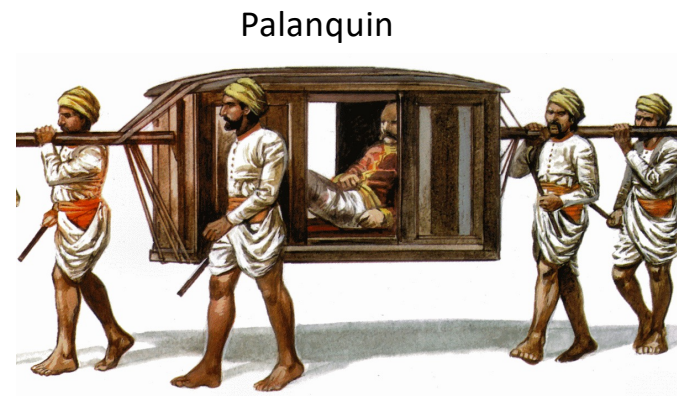
NIV

<sup>6</sup> *Who* is *this* coming up from the wilderness  
like a column of smoke,  
perfumed with myrrh and incense  
made from all the spices of the merchant?



# Song of Songs 3:6-5:1

<sup>7</sup> Behold, it is the litter (palanquin) of Solomon!  
Around it are sixty mighty men,  
some of the mighty men of Israel,  
<sup>8</sup> all of them wearing swords  
and expert in war,  
each with his sword at his thigh,  
against terror by night.  
<sup>9</sup> King Solomon made himself a carriage  
from the wood of Lebanon.  
<sup>10</sup> He made its posts of silver,  
its back of gold, its seat of purple;  
its interior was inlaid with love  
by the daughters of Jerusalem.  
<sup>11</sup> Go out, O daughters of Zion,  
and look upon King Solomon,  
with the crown with which his mother crowned him  
on the day of his wedding,  
on the day of the gladness of his heart.



# Song of Songs 3:6-5:1

- 4** <sup>1</sup>Behold, you are beautiful, my love,  
behold, you are beautiful!  
Your eyes are doves  
behind your veil.  
Your hair is like a flock of goats  
leaping down the slopes of Gilead.
- 2** Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes  
that have come up from the washing,  
all of which bear twins,  
and not one among them has lost its young.
- 3** Your lips are like a scarlet thread,  
and your mouth is lovely.  
Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate  
behind your veil.
- 4** Your neck is like the tower of David,  
built in rows of stone;<sup>[a]</sup>  
on it hang a thousand shields,  
all of them shields of warriors.
- 5** Your two breasts are like two fawns,  
twins of a gazelle,  
that graze among the lilies.



## Song of Songs 3:6-5:1

<sup>6</sup> Until the day breathes  
and the shadows flee,  
I will go away to the mountain of myrrh  
and the hill of frankincense.

<sup>7</sup> You are altogether beautiful, my love;  
there is no flaw in you.

[1:13 - <sup>13</sup> My beloved is to me a satchet of myrrh  
resting between my breasts.]



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

Theologically Rooted.....Pastorally Oriented

Grace AND Truth

Compassion AND Conviction



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

3 main approaches to homosexuality in Christianity

- **Side A** – gay marriage/sex is biblical (the kind of homosexuality condemned in bible is an abusive kind, not committed loving relationship)
  - Gay Christian Network (GCN)
- **Side B** – embrace your gay orientation (“Gay Christian”), but remain celibate
  - Revoice
- **Traditional view**
  - PCA Position Paper



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

- Tasked to “study the topic of human sexuality with particular attention to the issues of homosexuality, same-sex attraction, and transgenderism.....help pastors and sessions shepherd congregations who are dealing with same-sex attraction....(asks for) suggested ways to articulate and defend a biblical understanding of homosexuality, same-sex attraction, and transgenderism in the context of a culture that denies that understanding
- **Preamble** and **12 Statements** are first part of PP, summary
- “Pastoral task” and the “Apologetic task”





# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 1 – **Marriage**

- (marriage and sex) “between one man and one woman”
- Picture of Christ and church
- All other forms of sexual intimacy are sinful

## Nevertheless

- Just because you are married doesn't mean you cant sin sexually, ie not all sex within marriage is sinless
- Sexual immorality not an unpardonable sin



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

1 Cor 6:9 - <sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters **nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men**<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>a</sup> - *The words "men who have sex with men" translate two Greek words that refer to the passive and active participants in homosexual acts.*



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 2 – Image of God

- Created male and female in his image....human body is good....called to glorify God in our bodies.....God is God of order & design, he opposes the confusion of man as woman and woman as man (1 Cor 11:14-15)....**while it can be heartbreaking when there's confusion, men/women should be helped to live in accordance with their biological sex**

## Nevertheless

- Compassion to those who are confused by their gender identity (Gal 3:1, 2 Tim 2:24-26)....effects of the fall extend to corruption of our whole nature....incl how we think of our gender etc.
- "Moreover...in rare instances...(some) may possess an objective medical condition (where) their anatomical development may be ambiguous or does not match their genetic chromosomal sex (ie – intersex). Such person are...in the image of God and should live out their biological sex, insofar as it can be known"



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 3 – **Original Sin**

We are all sinners from Adam....”we ought to grieve for our sin, hate our sin, turn from our sin unto God, and endeavor to walk with God in obedience to his commandments”

Nevertheless,

“God does not wish for believers to live in perpetual misery for their sins” (which are forgiven)...”by the Spirit...we are able to make spiritual progress and to do good works, not perfectly, but truly. Even our imperfect works....made acceptable through Christ...”



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 4 - **Desire**

Even our fallen desires are in themselves sinful (Rom 6:11-12). The desire for an illicit end – whether for...same sex (SSA) or....disconnected from...Biblical marriage – is itself an illicit desire. Therefore, the experience of SSA is not morally neutral; the attraction is an expression of original or indwelling sin that must be repented of and put to death (Rom 8:13).

Nevertheless,

We must celebrate that, despite the continuing presence of sinful desires (and...egregious sinful behavior), repentant, justified, and adopted believers are free from condemnation....able to please God



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

**1 Peter 1:14** - <sup>14</sup> As obedient children, do not conform to the evil **desires** you had when you lived in ignorance.

**1 Peter 2:11** - <sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful **desires**, which wage war against your soul.

**Romans 6:11-12** - <sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its **evil desires**.

**Romans 7:8** - <sup>8</sup> But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of **coveting**

**Colossians 3:5** - <sup>5</sup> Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, **evil desires** and greed, which is idolatry



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 5 - **Concupiscence**

We affirm that impure thoughts and desires arising in us prior to and apart from a conscious act of the will are still sin. We reject the Roman Catholic understanding of concupiscence whereby disordered desires that conflict us due to the fall do not become sin without a consenting act of the will. These desires within us are not mere weaknesses or inclinations to sin but **are themselves idolatrous and sinful**


Nevertheless,



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 5 - **Concupiscence**

.... Nevertheless, we recognize that many persons who experience SSA describe their desires as arising in them unbidden and unwanted. We also recognize that the presence of SSA is often owing to many factors, which always include our own sin nature and may include being sinned against in the past. As with any sinful pattern or propensity—which may include disordered desires, extramarital lust, pornographic addictions, and all abusive sexual behavior—the actions of others, though never finally determinative, can be significant and influential. This should move us to compassion and understanding. Moreover, it is true for all of us that sin can be both unchosen bondage and idolatrous rebellion at the same time. We all experience sin, at times, as a kind of voluntary servitude (Rom 7:13-20).





# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Christopher Yuan

- Genetics only play a small role in determining sexual orientation
- Genetics cant predict whether a person is gay or straight
- Sexuality is not who you are, its how you are

## Rosaria Butterfield

*It matters **not** whether the desire for evil is involuntary or voluntary. The standard of rightness for a desire is God's law, **not the chosenness of the desire.***



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 6 - **Temptation**

2 main kinds of temptation in the Bible. From God or not from God. From God = morally neutral trials (ie-sickness). Not from God – morally illicit desires (James 1:13-14). When temptation comes from without = not sin unless act on it. When from within, “it is our own act and is rightly called sin”.

Nevertheless,

...”there’s an important degree of **moral difference** between temptation to sin and giving into sin”....Christians should feel greatest responsibility not for (the occurrence of temptations), but (for resisting them)....ultimate goal (of course) for the internal temptation to go away....



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 6 – **Temptation**

.....Christians should feel their greatest responsibility **not** for the fact that such temptations occur but for thoroughly and immediately fleeing and resisting the temptations when they arise.

We can avoid “entering into” temptation by refusing to internally ponder and entertain the proposal and desire to actual sin.

Without some distinction between (1) the illicit temptations that arise in us due to original sin and (2) the willful giving over to actual sin, Christians will be too discouraged to “make every effort” at growth in godliness and will feel like failures in their necessary efforts to be holy as God is holy (2 Peter 1:5-7; 1 Peter 1:14-16). God is pleased with our sincere obedience, even though it may be accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections (*WCF* 16.6).



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 7 - **Sanctification**

Christians need to pursue **holiness**. “The goal is not just consistent fleeing from, and regular resistance to, temptation, but the diminishment and even the **end** of the occurrences of sinful desires through the reordering of the loves of one’s heart towards Christ.” In Christ we can make progress in holiness.

Nevertheless,

“...The believer who struggles with SSA should expect to...(grow in holiness)...but this progress will **often be slow and uneven**. Moreover, (growth in holiness) involves the whole person, not simply unwanted sexual desires. The aim of sanctification in one's sexual life cannot be reduced to attraction to persons of the opposite sex (though some persons may experience movement in this direction), but rather involves growing in grace and perfecting holiness in the fear of God “



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 8 – **Impeccability (ie – Christs perfection)**

Jesus never sinned...He experienced morally neutral temptation from outside of him (trials, devils entreaties), not temptation from within (ie – disordered desires). He “only had the suffering part of temptation, where we also have the sinning part. Christ had no inward disposition or inclination unto the least evil, being perfect in all grace and all their operations at all times”

Nevertheless,

“Christ endured, from without, real soul-wrenching temptations which qualified him to be our sympathetic high priest (Heb. 2:18; 4:15). Christ assumed a human nature that was susceptible to suffering and death. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 9 - **Identity**

Our identity as "in Christ" is most important. "To juxtapose identities rooted in sinful desires alongside the term "Christian" (ie- Gay Christian) is inconsistent with Biblical language and undermines the spiritual reality that we are new creations in Christ. (2 Cor 5:17)

Nevertheless,

-We still need to talk about our sins and struggles, don't ignore them

-Moreover, we recognize there are some secondary identities that can be legitimately affirmed (ie – male/female, nationality) – these serve to magnify the glory of God in his plan of salvation



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

Rosaria Butterfield

*“How can any of us fight a sin that we don’t hate? Hating our own sin is a key component to doing battle with it. At the same time, we need to separate ourselves from the sin we hate. “*

Sam Alberry

“Desires for things God has forbidden are a reflection of how sin has distorted me, not how God has made me”



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 10 - **Language**

We affirm that those in our churches would be wise to avoid the term “gay Christian.” Although the term “gay” may refer to more than being attracted to persons of the same sex, the term does not communicate less than that. For many people in our culture, to self-identify as “gay” suggests that one is engaged in homosexual practice. At the very least, the term normally communicates the presence and approval of same-sex sexual attraction as morally neutral or morally praiseworthy. Even if “gay,” for some Christians, simply means “same-sex attraction,” it is still inappropriate to juxtapose this sinful desire, or any other sinful desire, as an identity marker alongside our identity as new creations in Christ.

Nevertheless,





# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 10 - **Language**

Nevertheless,

we recognize that some Christians may use the term “gay” in an effort to be more readily understood by non-Christians. The word “gay” is common in our culture, and we **do not think it wise for churches to police every use of the term**. Our burden is that we do not justify our sin struggles by affixing them to our identity as Christians. Churches should be gentle, patient, and intentional with believers who call themselves “gay Christians,” encouraging them, as part of the process of sanctification, to leave behind identification language rooted in sinful desires, to live chaste lives, to refrain from entering into temptation, and to mortify their sinful desires.



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 11 - **Friendship**

We affirm that our contemporary ecclesiastical culture has an underdeveloped understanding of friendship and often does not honor singleness as it should. The church must work to see that all members, including believers who struggle with same-sex attraction, are valued members of the body of Christ and engaged in meaningful relationships through the blessings of the family of God. Likewise we affirm the value of Christians who share common struggles gathering together for mutual accountability, exhortation, and encouragement.

Nevertheless,



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 11 - **Friendship**

Nevertheless, we do not support the formation of exclusive, contractual marriage-like friendships, nor do we support same-sex romantic behavior or the assumption that certain sensibilities and interests are necessarily aspects of a gay identity. We do not consider same- sex attraction a gift in itself, nor do we think this sin struggle, or any sin struggle, should be celebrated in the church.



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 12 – **Repentance and Hope**

We affirm that the entire life of the believer is one of repentance. Where we have mistreated those who struggle with same-sex attraction, or with any other sinful desires, we call ourselves to repentance. Where we have nurtured or made peace with sinful thoughts, desires, words, or deeds, we call ourselves to repentance. Where we have heaped upon others misplaced shame or have not dealt well with necessary God-given shame, we call ourselves to repentance.

Nevertheless,



# PCA Position Paper on Human Sexuality

## Statement 12 – **Repentance and Hope**

Nevertheless, as we call ourselves to the evangelical grace of repentance (*WCF* 15.1), we see many reasons for rejoicing (Phil. 4:1). We give thanks for penitent believers who, though they continue to struggle with same-sex attraction, are living lives of chastity and obedience. These brothers and sisters can serve as courageous examples of faith and faithfulness, as they pursue Christ with a long obedience in gospel dependence. We also give thanks for ministries and churches within our denomination that minister to sexual strugglers (of all kinds) with Biblical truth and grace. Most importantly, we give thanks for the gospel that can save and transform the worst of sinners—older brothers and younger brothers, tax collectors and Pharisees, insiders and outsiders. We rejoice in ten thousand spiritual blessings that are ours when we turn from sin by the power of the Spirit, trust in the promises of God, and rest upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life (*WCF* 14.2).



- If we are speaking to **cultural elites** who despise us and our beliefs, we want to be bold and courageous.
- If we are speaking to **strugglers** who fight against same-sex attraction, we want to be patient and sympathetic.
- If we are speaking to **sufferers** who have been mistreated by the church, we want to be winsome and humble.
- If we are speaking to **shaky Christians** who seem ready to compromise the faith for society's approval, we want to be persuasive and persistent.
- If we are speaking to those who are **living as the Scriptures would not have them live**, we want to be straightforward and earnest.
- If we are speaking to **belligerent Christians** who hate or fear persons who identify as gay or lesbian, we want to be clear and corrective.

