

# Human Sexuality: A Biblical Perspective

## First Presbyterian Church

### Jackson, MS

First Pres Forum  
Rev. Dr. David Strain  
September 21, 2022

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

We affirm the impeccability of Christ. The incarnate Son of God neither sinned (in thought, word, deed, or desire) nor had the possibility of sinning.

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

“We ascribe to Christ not only natural, but also moral, integrity or moral perfection, that is sinlessness.

This means not merely that Christ could avoid sinning (*potuit non peccare*), and did actually avoid it, but also that it was impossible for Him to sin (*non potuit peccare*) because of the essential bond between the human and divine natures” (Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 318).

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

Christ experienced temptation passively, in the form of trials and the devil's entreaties, not actively, in the form of disordered desires.

Christ had only the suffering part of temptation, where we also have the sinning part.

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

Christ had no inward disposition or inclination unto the least evil, being perfect in all graces and all their operations at all times.

# STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

This way of stating the matter comes from Owen: “[Christ] was also like unto us in temptations...But herein also some difference may be observed between him and us; for the most of our temptations arise from within us, from our own unbelief and lusts...But from these things he was absolutely free; for as he had no inward dispositions or inclination unto the least evil, being perfect in all graces and all their operations at all times, so when the prince of this world came unto him, he had no part in him,—nothing to close with his suggestions or to entertain his terrors.”

John Owen, *An Exposition of Hebrews* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991), 3:468.

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

Nevertheless, Christ endured, from without, real soul-wrenching temptations which qualified him to be our sympathetic high priest (Heb. 2:18; 4:15).

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

“For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).



## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

Christ assumed a human nature that was susceptible to suffering and death.

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Bavinck makes this point in arguing that although Christ's human nature was not fallen, he did assume a weak human nature that in some respects differed from Adam's before the Fall (Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:311). The impeccability of Christ does not mitigate against genuine struggle in the life of Christ. "For although real temptation could not come to Jesus from within but only from without, he nevertheless possessed a human nature, which dreaded suffering and death. Thus, throughout his life, he was tempted in all sorts of ways—by Satan, his enemies, and even by his disciples (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:1-13; Matt. 12:29; Luke 11:22; Matt. 16:23; Mark 8:33). And in those temptations he was bound, fighting as he went, to remain faithful; the inability to sin (*non posse peccare*) was not a matter of coercion but ethical in nature and therefore had to be manifested in an ethical manner."

John Owen, *An Exposition of Hebrews* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991), 3:315.

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief  
(Isa. 53:3).

## STATEMENT 8: IMPECCABILITY

“He was despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
he was despised, and we esteemed him not”  
(Isaiah 53:3).

## STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

We affirm that Christians should flee immoral behavior and not yield to temptation. By the power of the Holy Spirit working through the ordinary means of grace, Christians should seek to wither, weaken, and put to death the underlying idolatries and sinful desires that lead to sinful behavior.

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

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 toward Christ. Through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, we can make substantial progress in the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord (Rom. 6:14-19; Heb. 12:14; 1 John 4:4; WCF 13.1).

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.” (Rom. 6:14-19)

## STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).



## STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“They, who are once effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection, by his Word and Spirit dwelling in them: the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified; and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (WCF 13.1).

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

Nevertheless, this process of sanctification—even when the Christian is diligent and fervent in the application of the means of grace—will always be accompanied by many weaknesses and imperfections (WCF 16.5, 6), with the Spirit and the flesh warring against one another until final glorification (WCF 13.2).

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom, by them, we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants: and because, as they are good, they proceed from this Spirit; and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God’s judgment.”(WCF 16.5)

## STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“Notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unreprouvable in God’s sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections” (WCF 16.6).

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” (WCF 13.2).

## STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“The believer who struggles with same-sex attraction should expect to see the regenerate nature increasingly overcome the remaining corruption of the flesh, but this progress will often be slow and uneven.”

# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“Moreover, the process of mortification and vivification 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” (WCF 13.3).



# STATEMENT 7: SANCTIFICATION

“In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so, the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (WCF 13.3).

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