



Dear Bride and Groom,

We are very excited that you are considering getting married here at First Baptist Dallas. It is our responsibility to teach and uphold the biblical standard of the marriage covenant and family living. **Therefore, First Baptist Dallas requires each couple to attend an initial consultation with our minister before any dates can be confirmed on the church calendar.** You should allow at least one hour for this initial session. I will work with you to schedule this consultation.

Please complete the enclosed wedding application and testimony pages, sign the doctrinal statement and **email me a copy of the completed forms.** Once I receive your forms I will contact you to schedule your initial consultation with one of our ministers/counselors.

After the completion of your initial consultation **and** with the approval of the First Baptist Dallas counselor/minister, we will then contact you to set a meeting to finalize your date. At this meeting you will:

- Pay your **deposit** (half of venue fee)
- Discuss church policies regarding your wedding date (decoration restrictions, music selections, vendor policies, etc...)
- Receive your First Baptist Wedding Notebook

It is not advisable to book or pay deposits to any vendors or other facilities (reception, hotels, vendors, etc.) until the successful completion of your initial consultation.

I look forward to receiving your application and testimonies so that we can set up your initial counseling session. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Debe Cullen | Wedding Coordinator

First Baptist Dallas
1707 San Jacinto
Dallas, Texas 75201

O | 214.969.7731

F | 214.969.7779

First Baptist Dallas Wedding Application

BRIDE

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Date of Birth _____ (C) _____

Previous Marriage: Yes No Children: Yes No

Widowed Divorced Date Final: _____

First Baptist Dallas Member: Yes No

If "No", Church affiliation _____

Parent/Grandparent - First Baptist Dallas Member:

Yes No

Parent/Grandparent name _____

Primary phone _____

GROOM

Full Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Date of Birth _____ (C) _____

Previous Marriage: Yes No Children: Yes No

Widowed Divorced Date Final: _____

First Baptist Dallas Member: Yes No

If "No", Church affiliation _____

Parent/Grandparent - First Baptist Dallas Member:

Yes No

Parent/Grandparent name _____

Primary phone _____

Wedding Ceremony



Date: 1st request: _____ 2nd request: _____

Time: _____ #of guests _____ Rehearsal Date/Time: _____

Sanctuary (seats 1200) Truett Chapel (seats 400) Slaughter Chapel (seats 50)

Minister _____ FBCD Staff Guest Minister

If Guest Minister: Name _____ Name of Church: _____

Address of Church: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Email: _____

Reception *No outside caterers allowed.*

Reception at First Baptist: Yes No

If Yes: The Atruim St. Paul's Cafe

Number of Guest Expected: _____

Grace Parlor Center Stage

Return Documents



- Application
- Bride's & Groom's Testimonies
- Divorce Explanation (if applicable)
- Signature of Doctrinal Statements

You may return these documents to weddings@firstdallas.org or mail them to 1707 San Jacinto, Dallas.TX75201



First Baptist Dallas



Groom's Personal Testimony

Bride's Full Name _____

Groom's Full Name _____

Do you know for sure you will spend eternity in heaven? yes no

If God were to ask you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?", what would you say?

Please describe your current relationship with God.

First Baptist Dallas

Divorce Explanation

Name: _____

1. Were you a believer at the time of your first marriage?

2. Was your former spouse a believer at the time of your first marriage?

3. Were there biblical grounds for your divorce? Please explain.

4. Was there an attempt to reconcile with your previous spouse and did your church assist you in the process?

5. Is your former spouse still living? _____

6. Is your former spouse remarried? _____

Bride & Groom - Please read through this packet,

Doctrinal Statements on Marriage, Sex, Divorce, Remarriage
First Baptist Dallas

The wedding is a beautiful expression of the love that a couple has for each other and it is so much more. The time leading up to the ceremony itself should be part of a strong foundation for the marriage that will follow. We at First Baptist Dallas are excited to be able to explore this process with you.

At First Baptist Church of Dallas, the Pastoral Staff recognize that the Bible is the very word of the living God to us, His people. We understand the priority of knowing and obeying biblical truths. For this reason, we are deeply committed to studying and teaching Scripture with diligence and authority. Our Articles of Faith are taken from a detailed look at the Bible. We as a Church do embrace the inerrancy of the Bible.

This position statement on marriage, sex, divorce and remarriage presents the agreed upon position of the Pastoral Staff of First Baptist Church. We realize that there are differing interpretations of Scripture regarding divorce and remarriage among Christians equally committed to the authority of God's Word. While we have considered the most prevailing interpretations of Scripture in this area and have sought to find positions of agreement, we realize that no one in leadership can be asked to act against his conscience (Romans 14). However, we have agreed that the position stated herein represents a minimum standard from which we will not support a less restrictive position to be taken in our church. Although, based upon an individual's convictions before the Lord on these matters, we would respect those who have a more restrictive position as their personal conviction.

The purpose of this position statement is to provide a guide to our congregation, staff and leaders regarding the covenant of marriage. It is our prayer that marriages would be entered into with a commitment for life and would become enriched and fulfilled as husbands and wives embrace Christ and the commands of His Word. We also pray that divorce within the Church congregation would cease and that the sanctity of marriage would capture the hearts of church members to the point that they would pray for and encourage one another to pursue healthy, growing marriage relationships.

We have read and agree with the following Doctrinal Statements on Marriage, Sex, Divorce, Remarriage:

Bride: _____ Date _____

Groom: _____ Date _____

Doctrinal Statements on Marriage, Sex, Divorce, Remarriage

First Baptist Church
Dallas, Texas

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FBD Marriage Preparation Steps

Step One

The Wedding Coordinator will assist you in making an appointment with one of our church's ministers or counselors for an initial consultation.

It is important that you bring your completed wedding application and written testimonies with you to this meeting. During this initial consultation, the minister or counselor will discuss some of the following things:

- your relationship with Christ
- the biblical teachings of marriage as a covenant
- the importance of following a biblical standard in your marriage
- pre-marital counseling with one of our staff (3 sessions minimum are required)

Once you have completed this initial consultation, the minister or counselor will contact the Wedding Coordinator who will begin planning with you.

Step Two

You will meet with the Wedding Coordinator to set the wedding date and to plan the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will give you our First Baptist, Dallas Wedding Policies to assist you.

Step Three

After your initial consultation and your meeting with the Wedding Coordinator, you will need to schedule at least three pre-marital counseling sessions with a First Baptist, Dallas minister or counselor. If your pre-marital counseling sessions are handled with a counselor (or minister) not on staff at fbcd, it is important that your pre-marital counselor (or minister) write a letter indicating that you have completed the required sessions.

Step Four

Each couple is also required to attend the Nearly Wed class, which is offered multiple times during the year at First Baptist Dallas on Sunday mornings. If it is impossible for you to complete this course here, you may attend another church's class (see the approved list of offerings in the Wedding Policies). Some churches in the D-FW area may offer this course in a weekend setting.

Biblical Principles Regarding Sex and Marriage

Based on our core values of the authority of Scripture, our passion for God's name to be exalted and glorified, and our desire for those whom we marry to experience God's blessings upon their union, the pastor and ministerial staff adhere to what we believe are biblical principles regarding sex and marriage.

It is a violation of Scripture for a believer to marry a nonbeliever

- 2 Corinthians 6:14—"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?"
- A marriage can glorify God only when both parties are believers.
- Though every effort humanly possible should be made to bring a nonbeliever to Christ, FBD does not sanction the wedding of a believer to a nonbeliever.

The God-ordained ideal for marriage is a lifelong union between a man and woman who are both believers and who covenant to build a Christian home

- Genesis 2:24—"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh."
- Mark 10:9—"What therefore God hath joined together, let no man separate."
- Thus God's design for marriage is:
 - That marriage is a heterosexual, not a homosexual, relationship.
 - That marriage is a monogamous, not a polygamous, relationship.
 - That marriage is a permanent, not a temporary, relationship.

Sex is a gift from God

- Genesis 1:27—"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."
- God created us male and female, i.e., He created us to be sexual beings. Thus, God created us to have sex.

Sexual relations within marriage are to be enjoyed and celebrated

- Genesis 2:24, 25—"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife; and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed."
- Proverbs 5:18, 19—"Rejoice in the wife of your youth. . . . May her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love."

All sexual relations outside of marriage are sinful, destroy one's character, and incur the judgment and discipline of God

- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7—"It is God's will that you should be holy; that you should avoid sexual immorality; . . . The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life."
- The Bible is very clear that sex is intended solely for marriage, and that sexual relations prior to or outside of marriage are sinful. Marriage is God's appointed time and place for sexual passion and expression.
- Therefore, FBD does not sanction a wedding if the couple is cohabiting or is knowingly engaged in premarital sexual relations.
- If you are already sexually active, we want you to understand that premarital sex can actually harm your marriage, and our desire is that you succeed in your marriage.
- You are invited to contact the church office or the wedding coordinator and set up an appointment with a minister or counselor. He or she will sit down with you and discuss your situation on an individual basis.
- Situations involving so-called "common law marriages" will also be handled on an individual basis with a minister or counselor.

Sexual enjoyment is based on the principle that in marriage each one's body belongs to the other thus, one's sexuality is to be "other-oriented" rather than "self-oriented"

- 1 Corinthians 7:3, 4—"The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife."
- There is to be consideration for one's spouse. There is a mutual need that each partner is required to satisfy. There is to be no sexual bargaining between husband and wife. The Bible does not give the man superior sexual rights.

Sexual relations between husband and wife are viewed as an obligation and are to be on a regular basis

- 1 Corinthians 7:5—"Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."
- The biblical principle is that each party is to provide adequate sexual expression to the other. Abstinence from sex within marriage plays into the hands of Satan.
- Any abstinence from regular sexual relations must meet biblical criteria:
 - It is by mutual agreement.
 - It is only for a specific length of time.
 - It is for the purpose of prayer.

- Obviously abstinence from marital sexual relations will also be governed by special circumstances such as pregnancy, illness, or accident.

Procreation is a divine purpose of the marriage relationship

- Genesis 1:28—"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.'"
- Even though reproduction is a divine purpose for marriage, it is recognized that some couples are unable to have children for various reasons. It is also recognized that in some situations, particularly for medical reasons, it is inadvisable for couples to attempt to have children.
- Further, we affirm that the inability to have children does not make a marriage inferior or second-rate in any manner.

Adultery, bestiality, incest, lust, pornography, rape, prostitution, or sexual perversion in any form are sinful and incur the judgment of God

- All these violate the "one flesh" principle of the husband-wife relationship and are condemned in scripture.
- Jude 7—"Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire."

All expressions of homosexuality and lesbianism are sinful and incur the judgment of God

- Romans 1:26, 27—"Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."
- God's design for marriage is a heterosexual, not a homosexual, relationship.

The single state is never to be viewed as inferior to the marital state

- Note 1 Corinthians 7:32-36.
- Being single for life, i.e., celibacy is spoken of as a gift from God (1 Corinthians 7:7, 8).

Biblical Principles Regarding Divorce and Remarriage

Based on our core values of the authority of Scripture, our passion for God's name to be exalted and glorified, and our desire for those whom we marry to experience God's blessings upon their union, the pastor and ministerial staff adhere to what we believe are biblical principles regarding divorce and remarriage.

Divorce is not God's will for marriages

- Malachi 2:16—"I hate divorce" says the Lord God of Israel."
- scripture neither commands nor encourages divorce; it simply states that divorce is allowable under certain prescribed circumstances

Reconciliation is always preferable to divorce

- 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11—"To the married I give this command, (not I but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband."
- Even though divorce is permitted, it is never required or even encouraged. Forgiveness and reconciliation are always preferable to divorce.
- A spouse should be ready to forgive a partner who breaks the marriage vows if there is evidence of genuine repentance. The length of time required in this process will obviously vary according to individual circumstances.

Christ Himself permitted divorce only on the grounds of sexual immorality

- Matthew 5:32—"But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality (Gk., *porneia*,) causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery."
- Matthew 19:9—"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality (Gk., *porneia*), and marries another, commits adultery."
- The word translated "sexual immorality" in these verses can include sexual immorality of other types as well as sexual unfaithfulness-- homosexuality/lesbianism, incest, bestiality, and other forms of sexual perversion.
- Also, in our judgment, this exception is not limited only to the engagement period, as some would advocate.

In the course of divine revelation, another exception has been added, namely, a circumstance where an unbeliever abandons the marriage and files for divorce

- 1 Corinthians 7: 12-15—"To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him....But if the unbeliever leaves, let

him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.”

- Thus, willful desertion on the part of a nonbeliever also constitutes biblical grounds for divorce.

When Scripture permits divorce, the right to remarry is presupposed

- Note Deuteronomy 24:1-4.
- Though the certificate of divorce was not designed to encourage divorce, it did indicate that remarriage was permitted when a divorce was granted.
- The logical conclusion, then, is that, when there are biblical grounds for divorce, the believing or innocent partner does have the right to remarry. However, if the divorce was not on biblical grounds, any remarriage to another person is considered adultery. ***Let it be stated that such a remarriage is viewed as an adulterous action or event, not an ongoing state of adultery.***
- Therefore, in situations where one or both parties have been divorced, it must be determined that the divorce(s) was (were) granted on biblical grounds. When this is the case, the church recognizes the right of the innocent party to remarry and gives full recognition and legitimacy to the remarriage.
- Also, it is recognized that the screening process is not easy, and that mistakes will inevitably be made. However, this is the price which must be paid if the church is to be faithful to biblical truths regarding divorce and remarriage.
- Note: the decision regarding whether a divorce was granted on biblical grounds will be made by a ministerial team, not a single individual.

Remarriage is forbidden for Christians who divorce without biblical grounds

- 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11—“Now to the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.”
- When a Christian couple divorces, every effort should be made on the part of both parties to bring about reconciliation. FBD desires to help divorced couples be reconciled by providing appropriate marital counseling. The Bible simply does not recognize incompatibility as grounds for divorce.
- Ideally, whenever a couple seeks a divorce without biblical grounds, their home church should fulfill their responsibility to pursue the steps of reconciliation delineated in Matthew 18:15-17. Unfortunately, however, such is often not the case.
- ***If reconciliation is not achieved, both parties are to remain unmarried. However, should one party refuse and reject all attempts of reconciliation and choose to remarry, the other party is then considered free to remarry.***
- Once a partner has chosen to remarry, the union has been permanently broken; therefore, reconciliation should no longer be pursued. Two wrongs simply do not make a right.

Remarriage is permitted when the former spouse is deceased

- Romans 7:2—"For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband."
- The notion that a Christian is not permitted to remarry another Christian after the death of a spouse is simply a misinterpretation of scripture.

When a divorce occurred prior to conversion, remarriage may be permitted for the new believer, provided the new partner is a believer

- 2 Corinthians 5:17—"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new."
- If the former marriage partner has become a Christian, remarriage to that partner should be sought. If the former partner has not become a Christian, remarriage to that person would be in violation of Scripture (2 Corinthians 6:14).

Divorce, because it is a violation of God's plan for marriage, carries with it painful consequences

- Though there can be divine forgiveness for divorce, God's forgiveness does not automatically remove the painful consequences that inevitably accompany divorce.
- It is the heartfelt desire of FBD to minister to individuals and families suffering the consequences of divorce and to help them respond biblically to whatever situation they face.

Divorce is not an unpardonable sin

- 1 John 1:9—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- God has made provision for the complete forgiveness of all sin, including divorce, where there is genuine confession and forgiveness.

FBD Marriage Ceremony Policies

Ministers other than First Baptist Dallas staff

- Normally the pastor or another licensed or ordained minister on the FBD staff will officiate at weddings performed at FBD, it is permissible for a minister from another Southern Baptist Church or church of like faith to officiate at a wedding upon approval by FBD pastoral staff

The Lord's Supper

- The Lord's Supper is intended to be a corporate church ordinance, to be administered by the church and observed by believers only, therefore the Lord's Supper will not be conducted for the couple or congregation at wedding ceremonies

RESOURCES

Book List

Personal growth

Boundaries	Henry Cloud and John Townsend
Peacemaking for Families	Ken Sande
Search for Significance	Robert McGee
Five Steps to Forgiveness	Everett Worthington
Every Man's Battle	Steve Arterburn

Finances

Master your Money	Ron Blue
Money Before Marriage	Larry Burkett
Money Matters for Newlyweds	Larry Burkett
Financial Peace	Dave Ramsey
Total Money Makeover	Dave Ramsey

Marriage and family

Love and Respect	Emerson Eggerichs
Boundaries in Marriage	Henry Cloud & John Townsend
The Five Love Languages	Gary Chapman
Forgiving Our Parents and Forgiving Ourselves	David Stoop
The Gift of the Blessing	Gary Smalley & John Trent
His Needs, Her Needs	Willard Harley
Making Love Last forever	Gary Smalley
For Women Only	Shaunti Feldhaan
For Men Only	Jeff Feldhaan

Sex

The Act of Marriage	Tim Lahaye
The Gift of Sex	Clifford and Joyce Penner
Intended for Pleasure	Ed and Gaye Wheat
Sexual Intimacy in Marriage	Bill Cutrer

Websites

Counseling issues/helps

www.christiancounseling.com (Christian Counseling Associates)

Dallas area (3 or 4 locations)

www.EstherOnline.org (sexual addiction)

www.freedomeveryday.org (L.I.F.E. ministries, helping men with sexual addiction)

www.newlife.com (John Townsend, Henry Cloud)

www.sexualwholeness.com (Dr. Christopher McCluskey's)

Marriage and family

www.covenantmarriage.com

www.crown.org

www.family.org (James Dobson)

www.familylife.com (Dennis and Barbara Rainey)

www.garysmalley.com

www.heritagebuilders.org

www.marriagealive.com (David and Claudia Arp)

www.marriageandfamilymatters.org (JB Collingsworth)

www.marriagebuilders.com (Williard Harley)

www.marriagesavers.org

www.realfamilies.com (Kevin Leman)

www.realrelationships.com (Les and Leslie Parrott)

www.smartmarriages.com

Men

www.covenanteyes.com

www.Maninthemirror.org

www.promisekeepers.org

www.ransomedheart.org

www.stevefarrar.com

Devotionals, Bible studies, etc.

www.bibleteachingnotes.com

www.blueletterbible.org

www.breakpoint.org (Chuck Colson)

www.desiringgod.org (John Piper)

www.hispeace.org (Peacemakers)

www.lifeway.com

www.netbible.org

www.gty.org (John Macarthur)

www.sermons.org

www.tonyevans.org (Tony Evans)

www.turningpt.org (David Jeremiah)

Women

www.angelministries.org

www.bethmoore.org

www.precept.org

www.womenoffaith.com

www.womensministry.net