



What is the Moral Framework?

The points below help make the moral case for why congregations can and should engage on the issue of teen and unplanned pregnancy.

- 1. The Black church has a unique and historic ability to impact the most important social issues of our time. Teen and unplanned pregnancy is one of those critically important issues—because when teens and young adults can delay starting families until they are ready, they are better positioned to thrive.**

Isaiah 1:17: "Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."

Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

- 2. We are called to carry each other's burdens, sharing in both joy and pain. Teens and young adults are confronted with questions and challenges related to teen and unplanned pregnancy, and the church is called to support and guide them.**

Galatians 6:2: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

- 3. The church is meant to be a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints. We have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory, and the church should be the first place people turn, rather than the last.**

Mark 2:17: "On hearing this, Jesus said to them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"

- 4. This call to compassion extends especially to young people. They are truly our future, and the Bible calls us to have a particular concern for their wellbeing.**

Matthew 19:14: "Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'"

- 5. When we engage those young people, we are called to operate not with judgment, but with love.**

Luke 6:37: "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven."

- 6. We can share truth with people and love them at the same time: speaking truth in love. It is possible to uphold a moral standard—such as teaching about responsible sexual behavior—while also ensuring that young people know that we love them and support them no matter what.**

Ephesians 4:15: "Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church."

- 7. People who have made mistakes and have been ashamed can be restored. No one is beyond redemption and no matter the challenges one has faced, there are brighter days ahead.**

Isaiah 61:7: "Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy."