

GAY MARRIAGES: WHY NOT?

House Bill No. 2357 proposes to legalize marriages between two people of the same sex.

How do evangelicals respond to this?

We begin by examining our understanding of marriage. What does the Bible say about marriage?

The Bible and Marriage

Because we are evangelicals--Bible believers--we turn to Scripture for our teaching. We turn to Scripture because we are disciples of the Lord Jesus and we follow His example. He said, "The Scriptures cannot be broken" (John 10:35). In His own teaching on marriage, for example in Matthew 19, the Lord Jesus turned to the book of Genesis chapters one and two.

According to the opening chapter of Genesis, the book of beginnings, God created humankind as male and female (Gen. 1:26-28). God created only two sexes, only two genders.

God intended Adam and Eve to be complementary. Both of them were bearers of the imago Dei, the divine image or likeness, and were therefore equal in dignity and worth before God. Both were given authority to rule over the earth and its creatures. The two were commanded to be fruitful and multiply. Though similar to each other, and equal, Adam and Eve were not twins, nor mirror images, nor clones. They were different enough to be complementary.

None of the animals was suitable to be a full partner to Adam (Gen. 2:18-25). Eve was taken from his side and made of exactly the same stuff as he. Only Eve could take his loneliness away. In becoming one flesh Adam and Eve complemented and completed each other. Marriage is the life-long union of two complementary persons, meant to produce children for the next generation. God's design ensures the survival of the human race. In the act of love, the loving couple produce children whom they are to love and nurture to maturity. How grand is the wisdom of God in establishing the family!

We may conclude that God's design for marriage includes at least these two purposes: the loving companionship of a man and woman for life, and the procreation of children. The physical act of love, included in what it means to become one flesh, perfectly expresses and demonstrates God's design. Sex is an act of love that leads to procreation. The male sex organ and the female sex organ are obviously designed to fit together.

It is in the light of this biblical understanding of marriage that we may examine the proposal of same sex marriage.

The Bible and Homosexuality

The Bible is clear and categorical in condemning homosexual acts. Here are the particular texts: Genesis 19: 4-9; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1: 26, 27; 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11; 1 Timothy 1: 8-10. There have been many attempts, some of them very clever, to reinterpret these

passages to make them say something else. Let the reader simply read the passages for himself and come to his own conclusions.

For ourselves, from the biblical teaching we come to the following convictions:

1. We agree with the Roman Catholic Catechism that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered" (2357, Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 529). They go against the natural design for human beings.
2. Homosexual acts cannot produce children and therefore jeopardize and subvert the future of the human race.
3. Homosexual relationships do not proceed from genuine complementarity of the sexes. Two males in a marriage can only be a mirror image. Likewise, two females.

While we admit that many heterosexual marriages fail (because we are sinful creatures), there is no future to same sex marriages. A recent study by the Dutch psychotherapist Gerhard van den Aardweg, published in the magazine "Medicine and Ideology" was based on a survey among 574 gays in America. Only three of them had a single sexual partner; 28 per cent stated they had intercourse with more than 1,000 men. van den Aardweg writes, "A homosexual relationship is in no way comparable to a marriage. A characteristic is, in fact, their non-permanence and lack of fidelity. If children, without exception, already suffer permanent emotional and relational damages when their own parents divorce and re-marry, how can they be entrusted to the care of homosexual couples where the probability of their breaking-up is a given fact?" He was particularly answering the question, "Should homosexual couples be allowed to adopt children?"

What then is a Christian attitude to gays and lesbians?

A Christian Attitude to Homosexuals

Christians must be respectful of homosexuals and compassionate towards them. We should do all we can to understand them. They are human beings, created in the image of God. The imago Dei has been distorted by sin (as is true of all of us) but the likeness to God is not obliterated.

Out of this respect and recognition of their humanity, we must be sensitive to every form of unjust discrimination against homosexuals. We must stand up for their right to education, to employment, and to social services. If we do not discriminate against other sinners--the sexually immoral people, the greedy, the swindlers, the idolaters, the slanderers, and the drunkards (Paul's list in 1 Corinthians 5 and 6)--we should not discriminate against the homosexuals and regard them as more wicked than the others.

Respect and compassion are Christian virtues. However, we cannot condone homosexual acts and accept them to be just as normal as being left-handed. The Bible clearly condemns homosexual acts and the homosexual lifestyle. For us to be accepting would be to disobey the clear teaching of God's Word. It is to affirm homosexuals in their sinful ways and to send them to perdition.

That is why we must be eager to share the gospel of God's grace with homosexuals, as with other kinds of people. Only in Christ is there true freedom and liberation. Everyone quotes, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Not everyone realizes that these words from the Lord Jesus are preceded by, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples" (John 8:31, 32). In the same paragraph He promises: "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). There is freedom in Jesus!

Gay right to employment, education, and social services, YES. Gay marriages, NO.