

Originally published in the December 2008 issue of the **Huron Church News** under the title *OPINION: A Discussion on Same Sex Blessings*

Some would say that the debate in the Anglican Church of Canada, and the Diocese of Huron, over same sex blessings is continuing on for at least another two years. This is the result of the statement released by the House of Bishops. However, I beg to differ. From my personal perspective, **this is not a debate about same sex blessings at all. It is a debate about being true to our Faith.** Allow me to explain, although this explanation may seem to start from a strange place, and take a winding road.

In the 4th century, the early Christian Church had spread rapidly throughout the "known world".

Communications being what they were back then, local "variations" in "the Faith" began to emerge. Consequently, the Bishops decided to meet in Nicaea, and come to a consensus, a definition if you will, of what it means to be a Christian. The result has been part of our Christian heritage ever since, and is shared by all Christians everywhere. We know it as the Nicene Creed, and this is the very definition of what a Christian is. To this day, we Anglicans recite this Creed as part of our regular worship to God. But do we ever think about what we are saying, and what it means? Or are we simply, mindlessly, just going through the motions of a weekly routine? If we are going to say it, then we should mean it! If we are not going to mean it, then we should not be saying it. For if we say it, and do not mean it, and then we are liars and hypocrites.

When we recite the Nicene Creed, we are publicly stating that we "believe" many things. We are stating that we believe in a single, one God that created everything, that being "God the Father", the first part of the Holy Trinity. Also, that we believe in Jesus Christ. We repeatedly, and with ever increasing emphasis, state that Jesus is God. Begotten not made. Begotten before all worlds. God of God. Light of Light. Very God of Very God! There is no two ways about it. We as Christians BELIEVE that Jesus IS God the Son, the second part of the Holy Trinity. We also state that we believe in the Holy Ghost, which is the third part of the Holy Trinity. That as this Holy Ghost "He has spoken through the prophets". There is a lot more, but for now, I would like to speak to what all of this so far means.

That "He has spoken through the prophets" is a statement about the Holy Bible. We do not believe that any part of the Holy Bible is the writings of men, such as Moses, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, or Paul. We believe that every word of the Holy Bible is in fact God speaking to us through the things that God has told the prophets to record in writing. Thus, because God decided that everything in the Holy Bible is important enough that He instructed the prophets to record it in writing, we as Christians are Faith bound to be mindful of everything that is in the Holy Bible. We do not have the option of treating the Bible like a buffet lunch, taking only those things that we like, and leaving behind those things we find difficult. God gave all of it to us, and we are obligated to take all of it.

We, as Christians, of course place considerable emphasis on the Teachings of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Why? Because, Jesus Christ is God. Remember, that in the Nicene Creed, we proclaim Jesus Christ to in fact be "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very

God". There were a lot of things that God determined to be very important for us to know, so important that He took human form in order to personally deliver the lessons.

Additionally, we also have within our Christian Faith seven Sacraments. These are: Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Eucharist, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Orders. Of these seven, two were taught to us directly by Jesus Christ, which makes these two unquestionably "Core Doctrine". These two "Core Doctrine" Holy Sacraments are the Eucharist, and Marriage.

The Eucharist is the administration of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in our Communion. It is based on the Teachings that Jesus Christ gave us at the Last Supper, which is the celebration of the Passover. Just as the Hebrews sacrificed sheep so that the Angel of Death would pass over them prior to the Exodus, Jesus Christ is our Sacrificial Lamb, so that the power of the Angel of Death will pass over us, and we can then be saved from the terrible consequences of our sins. This is vitally important for us to fully comprehend and understand. Jesus Christ did not do away with sin! What had been a sin, was still a sin, and would forever be a sin. Jesus Christ overcame the deathly power of sin.

What of the other "Core Doctrine" Holy Sacrament of Marriage? Remember that as Christians we BELIEVE that Jesus Christ is God the Son. Also, that the Holy Bible is God speaking to us through the prophets, and that makes everything in the Holy Bible the Word of God (not the words of men). Jesus taught us specifically about Marriage in Matthew 19:1-10, which reads:

Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, that He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for

sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." (*New King James Version*)

It is absolutely clear from this Teaching that as God has made us two sexes (or genders) of male and female, that it is by the design of God that we are to be joined as man and wife. Furthermore, that Marriage is not an act of two people having a fancy contract signing ceremony. Marriage is more than a ceremony presided over by a Priest. Marriage is an Act of God, in which God himself joins a man to his wife.

Us saying that Marriage is anything else would be us denying a Teaching of Jesus Christ. We would be denying that the Holy Bible is the Word of God. We would be contradicting what we say when we recite the Nicene Creed. We would be liars. We would be hypocrites. We would be false prophets!

This is not a debate about sex. It is entirely a debate about being Christians, Faithful to the Teachings that were given to us by God Himself in human form

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