

To: The Anglican Church of Canada
Commission on the Marriage Canon
Fm: Norman Henderson
Parish: St. John the Evangelist
Dioceses: Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador
Subj: The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony

As an Anglican of 29 years (by choice, not birth), a Christian of 60 years, a husband of 46 years, and a Confirmation Teacher of 10 years, I hold very dear the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. I have been troubled over the past years since the 2002 controversy concerning the Diocese of New Westminster. In teaching Confirmation Candidates, my emphases has always been on the purity of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony as defined by the inspired word of God in the Holy Bible.

Beginning in Genesis, God created Man and Woman to be joined together as one, for reproduction. Through the Old Testament, we see His involvement in the development of His nation, Israel by the selection of the men and women joined together to establish the lineage of Jesus the Christ. Through the Law, God defined the principals of life that are acceptable and those that are not. God identified the sins of the flesh and His rejection of them as His standard for spiritual life: sodomy, fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, prostitution, lust, rape, bestiality, cross dressing (clothing or surgically as a transvestite), and effeminacy. In the New Testament, we receive confirmation of these standards from Jesus and each of the authors, through Gods inspiration.

As a boy, I was often told by my father "If it's in the Bible, Believe it". As an adult, I have held to that as a rule governing my life. I have embraced it in my selection of the Anglican Church, and I have taught it to my students. The question of the approval of same sex marriage within the Anglican Church has presented a problem of the validity of the Bible as the basis of our religion. Do we or do we not accept the Bible as the inspired word of God and the foundation of our beliefs as Anglicans? To approve same sex marriage, will require the removal or change of numerous verses in the Bible. If even one verse is changed or eliminated to conform to the standards of the world, then the sad reality is that the Anglican Church can not receive the blessings of God as are stated in the complete Bible that we now hold as truth.

One of the explanations of the homosexual is that of being born a homosexual. I contend that we were all born into sin as the seed of Adam (as stated in the Bible). Each of us as human beings (except for Jesus) are born with the propensity to deceit, theft, fornication, murder, ect. yes, and homosexuality. Thanks to God in His wisdom at creation, He also gave each of us the freedom of choice. As a human being I can choose to live within the standards of the world, or accept the standards given by God. As a Christian, having accepted Jesus as my Lord, and the forgiveness of sin, I additionally receive the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to make right choices and defeat the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. As we consider freedom of choice in relationship to the law (Torah), we realize that only by the grace of God, through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, are we released from the penalty of the law (Rom. 6:14). But as

Christians living under Grace, we must at all times desire and strive to please God. We are living in the times much like first and second century (AD) that we read about in the New Testament. Morality was then and is today very far from the expectations of God, and should be an indignity to each of us as Christians. We read of the Gnostics and the Nicolaitians who felt that it was their responsibility to experience all sin so that the grace of God could be activated. Today, we see similar attitudes in the sinful nature of the world, and especially in the Gay Community. Thus, it becomes our responsibility to accept the homosexual into our congregations with Christian love, understanding, and training to bring them to the full knowledge of God's standard and their ability of achieving it through Jesus Christ as their Lord, Strength, and Saviour, and reaching a right relationship with God the Father, by the forgiveness of sin through the blood of Jesus. As the local congregation, we must provide an atmosphere of love and understanding so that they may feel the desire to repent, turn from the bondage of homosexuality and to live in the joy of God's grace and peace. As Jesus said to the prostitute, "Go, and sin no more"(John 8:11).

I submit this letter with the prayer that it will be helpful to the Commission in the decision process of 2015/16. If however, the decision is made to approve same sex marriage through the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, each and every Bishop and Priest must be granted the authority to act within the conscience of his/her relationship with God, concerning this matter.

Most Respectfully,



Norman H. Henderson

Applicable Bible verses:

Genesis 1:27-28

19:1-11

Leviticus 18:22

20:10-16

Deuteronomy 22:5

27:20-23

1 Kings 14:24

15:12

Romans 1:18-32

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

7:1-40

10:13

Ephesians 4:19

1 Timothy 1:8-10

Hebrews 13:4

Jude 7