

Submission for the Commission on the Marriage Canon

If we are going to look at the idea of changing the Canon XXI on Marriage to allow the marriage of same sex couples, I believe we have to go back to the one who first instituted marriage and that is God.

We call ourselves Christians, that means we follow God through our Lord Jesus Christ. If we call him lord we are to do as he commands not necessarily what we want to do. Jesus says “If you love me you will keep my commandments”, “If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.” We are then bound by the commands that God has decreed through his word, Genesis to Revelation. God, like his word, does not and cannot change “heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away”, “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.” God's laws and promises also never change, for if they were mutable we could have no assurance of our salvation or anything from God. We can not pick and choose what things are no longer applicable and what things are applicable using our fickle perspective to be our standard. If God's laws are open to change then it must follow that his promises are also open to change. In discerning the truths in the bible we must let scripture interpret scripture to see where the lines are drawn and scripture can not contradict scripture thus giving us then an unreliable source for anything. But nowhere in scripture has he softened the attitudes on moral standards but in fact has made them stricter. We must also recognize that we are not the ones who set the standards in anything, He sets the standards and we follow. He has not given us the right to change anything that he has set forth in his word but we are to follow. He is Lord, not us.

So we have established that God's word is eternal and unchanging, so now let us see in his unchanging word what He has to say about marriage in particular. We have in his word and in the first chapters of his book we see his motivation for creating man and woman.” The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: “This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called ‘woman,’ for out of ‘her man’ this one has been taken.” That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.” Jesus also quotes this “He said in reply, 'Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife” God made them from the beginning with the idea of marriage to once again, as it were, to become one flesh for they were created from one flesh.

R C Sproul wrote “Man and woman are one in essence. That is to say, Adam and Eve

are equal in dignity, value, and glory. In essential unity there is absolutely no room for inferiority of person. The man and woman are equal in every respect except one - authority. Two different tasks are given to people of equal value and dignity. In the economy of marriage, only the job descriptions are different. And also “Marriage is ordained and instituted by God—that is to say, marriage did not just spring up arbitrarily out of social conventions or human taboos. Marriage was not invented by men but by God.” Marriage is a wonderfully sacred institution, given by God as a blessing to—and the building block of—all societies. Government did not define or establish marriage; God did. God leaves no wiggle room for man or governments to change an institution which He has ordained. We can even look to the end of all things to the marriage supper of the Lamb where he uses marriage as an analogy to what is going to happen with Christ and the church ,the bride and groom not bride and bride or groom and groom or any other configuration.

If we look at the foundations of the Anglican Church we have the 39 Articles .Number 20 says this “The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: and **yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another.** Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.” If the canons are still part of the basis of Anglican thought then we must hold to these and not ignore them out of convenience. J C Ryle in 1877 when writing about the 39 Articles said “The object for which the Articles were drawn up is clearly stated in the title of them, which any one will find in a proper Prayer-book. They are called: "Articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole clergy, in the Convocation holden at London in the year 1562, for avoiding of diversities of opinion, and for the establishment of consent touching true religion.”” If we as Anglicans do not believe in the 39 Articles any more then we should have them tossed out and then try to change the canon on marriage but if we still hold to them as foundations of the church then it would seem impossible to change the canon of marriage and hold the 39 articles as true. If we no longer believe in the relevancy of the 39 articles then we should be looking to have them removed from our “Declaration of Principals “of the Anglican Church of Canada before we look to change the marriage canon. If we are trying to establish something that run contrary to what God has clearly proclaimed in his word is tantamount to heresy. Scripture is replete with scripture that expounds the sanctity of marriage and the way that he sees any sexual activity outside the bound of marriage is an abomination and as I states earlier that marriage is only between a man and a woman. Joe Carter (editor for The Gospel Coalition, director of communications for the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (SBC), and senior editor at The Acton Institute) wrote “Because marriage requires the specific form of a union of man and woman (Gen. 2:24), applying the term to same-sex unions alters the very concept of what a marriage is for and what functions it takes.”, “In acceding to laws

that redefine marriage, they are doing the very opposite of what Jesus calls us to do: they are hating their neighbors, including their gay and lesbian neighbors. You do not love your neighbor by encouraging them to engage in actions that invoke God's wrath (Ps. 5:4-5; Rom. 1:18). As Christians, we may be required to tolerate ungodly behavior, but the moment we begin to endorse it, we too become suppressors of the truth. You cannot love your neighbor and want to see them excluded from the kingdom of Christ (Eph. 5:5).” In the 39 Articles of the Anglican church article #7 **Of the Old Testament.**-The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the Law given from God by Moses, as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral. We as confessing Anglicans have as our foundation the 39 Articles and these articles are used to set the foundation of what we believe as Anglicans .This article tells us that if we call ourselves Christian we are bound to the obedience of all the laws that are called “Moral” and it is clear that sexual relationships outside the bounds of marriage and homosexual activity is repugnant to God according to His word.

So in closing ,it has been clear throughout the ages that God created men and women for a purpose and designed them specifically for that purpose physically and mentally. He created marriage that those characteristics perfectly dovetail with one another which does not exist in same sex marriages,one has to “play the part of husband or wife”. In seeing that God ,who can not change (Malachi 3:6,Numbers 23:19, Job 23:13,Psalm 33:11,Psalms 102:25-27, James 1:17) has created the institute of marriage. And having known mans propensities throughout all ages has still proclaimed from the beginning that marriage is only between a man and a woman ,he knew form the beginning that marriage would be attacked in this way now but still his word remains sure and constant. His purpose and design of marriage have not changed and his attitude to the acts of homosexuality have not changed ,even though the worlds may have. We run the risk of working against the will and tenets of God when we try to re write what God has written in His word. Although we call ourselves Christian and proclaim that Jesus is lord of our life we live and act as if we are autonomous ,that we are sovereign over our lives. God is the author of all creation therefore He alone has the authority to set the standard that we are obliged to follow. We are not free to set the standards for our own lives , “...you are not your own for you have been bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body”. It seems that we are going back to the beginning again with the Fall ,mans sin there was he wanted to be autonomous and be the one who discerned right for wrong

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