

September 30, 2014

Commission on the Marriage Canon
Anglican Church of Canada
80 Hayden Street
Toronto, ON M4Y 3G2

Dear Members of the Commission,

God's peace and light be with you.

It is with guidance from the Holy Spirit, prayer and humility that I embark on the daunting task of sharing my opinion regarding the proposed changes to the Marriage Canon. I do not have a background in theology and I have only, but recently, finished reading the Bible in its entirety but I am reminded that Jesus Christ spoke powerfully through everyday people like his disciples and St. Paul therefore I put my faith in God and my thoughts on paper.

God made man and he made woman. He united them and they became one. This was at the beginning of time and today man still exists and so does woman. They are both physically and physiologically different and their physical bodies come together as beautifully crafted art. Not only are they able to mold together in intimacy, they create life. The root of Christian belief is that life emanates from God Himself and man and woman are gifted the ability to create this miraculous life time and time again. Christian Marriage is the bringing together of man and woman, the celebration of the unification of a male to a female who, God willing, continue the cycle of life through sexual intimacy, a procreating sexual intimacy that can only occur when male and female join together.

Though scripture can at times be unclear, never does it allude to marriage between two males or two females. In the Old Testament we see that marriage can happen between one man and many women but the message in the New Testament evolves the relationship between man and woman, asking for fidelity, commitment and life long partnership. St Paul speaks clearly and concisely to marriage, sexuality, sexual sin and sexual immorality. An example of this is in Romans 1: 16-27.

If God gave us Scripture as a guide by which to live our lives, why would he have made His written Word impossible to understand? Christian faiths have struggled with many interpretations of God's teachings and as a result the Church has seen many divisions. Are we to interpret Scripture to fit our own reality and misguided wants and needs or are we invited to hear the message of God and follow in His ways? Following God's way does not mean staying within our own comfort zone or minimizing sin so that we do not have to feel daily shame. Following Scripture and Church doctrines is about a journey towards spiritual maturity, acknowledgment of our sinning nature and sincere prayer for forgiveness

I am a part of an interchurch family, a Roman Catholic married to an Anglican and the members of our family are active members of St. Stephen's Anglican parish. The ways of the Anglican Church have deepened our faith in God and have encouraged us to continue setting aside our own wants and desires to put God first. This is a daily struggle but God's love and forgiveness sustains our journey towards His truth. As Christians we have the responsibility of making sure that all people feel loved and accepted in our Churches. We also have the responsibility to live in the ways of Christ and to model His lifestyle to others. A "God first" approach focuses on God's wants for us not our wants for self. How do we and the Church stop from getting caught up in the modern day evil of putting self first and keep God first. If a Christian Religion compromises God's will to appease those who are tempted to veered away from Church Doctrines does it then become a sect?

The Marriage Canon is not a set of rules that makes the Sacrament of Marriage exclusive, it is an open invitation to all men and woman to do God's will, to put a sacrifice forward to Him and unite in love as only He could create us to do. It is a vocational calling to a man and a woman to live a Christ like life cooperatively and supportively experiencing with one another a blissful wondrous state of love and passion that reflects and celebrates God's original and lasting plan for humanity. The Sacrament of Marriage encompasses many things: unification of man to woman with full submission to one other, sexual intimacy to create life, self-sacrifice and continual service to the Lord and to the Christian community.

Many questions remain for me – what other points of the Marriage Canon are we going to ask to change next? Will we end the Church's responsibility to support married couples seeing as there is a lack of funding and volunteers? Why are the laws of government held at a higher standard than those of God Himself? Points driven from government law would not be seen as having the same flexibility. Why could someone not marry before the age of 16? Why could someone not marry without a license or witnesses? In years to come will the Church allow for marriage between one man and many women or one woman and many men? Who are our modern day prophets and are we hearing their voices. Do we care to hear the warnings from God that the Asherah poles must be destroyed and that we need to find our way back to Him? If the changes proposed to the Marriage Canon have to include a "conscience clause" are they really driven by God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?

There are more questions than answers yet God is there to guide us and will continue to lead His church until His second coming. May we feel peace in knowing that He will be there for everyone on the last day.

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with Gods people. Amen

Revelations 22: 20-21

Yours in Christ,

Anne Marchildon-Wong