

On Changes to the Marriage Canon

As same-sex marriage is unknown to history and tradition, and has been universally condemned by the Church from earliest times, it should be unthinkable to introduce changes to the Marriage Canon to reflect this societal innovation. Indeed in the **Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England**, Article XXXIV, *Of the Traditions of the Church*, it is stated, "Whosoever through his private judgement, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren. (<http://www.anglican.ca/about/beliefs/39-articles/>) As the Bible, both in the Old Testament (Genesis 2:24) and in the New Testament (Ephesians 5:31) describes marriage as a union of one man and one woman, nothing should be added to the Marriage Canon to change this.

Such innovations as same-sex marriage open the door to further changes in the definition of marriage, and the same unscriptural arguments to justify same-sex marriage could be used to justify the legalization of incestuous marriage, marriage between a human and an animal, or polygamy.

Changing the Marriage Canon would bring about further disunity with the world's major Christian Churches. For instance, The **Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America**, the highest representative body of Orthodox people in America, reaffirmed in a statement on September 2013 that "the Orthodox Christian teaching on marriage and sexuality, firmly grounded in Holy Scripture, two millennia of Church Tradition, and Canon Law, holds that the sacrament of marriage consists in the union of a man and a woman, and that authentic marriage reflects the sacred unity that exists between Christ and His Bride, the Church. Acting upon any sexual attraction outside of sacramental marriage, whether the attraction is heterosexual or homosexual, alienates us from God".

<http://assemblyofbishops.org/about/documents/2013-assembly-statement-on-marriage-and-sexuality>)

The Roman Catholic Church, in discussing *Why does the Church oppose government-sanctioned homosexual "marriages"?* asserts "Two men cannot legitimately marry each other, nor can two women, no matter what any earthly judicial or legislative body may say. Marriage is by nature defined by the conjugal act between one man and one woman, a monogamous or exclusive union in which the two become one in a lifelong partnership (cf. Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:4-6). This truth is understandable not only through divine Revelation, but also through natural reason. For by nature, man and woman are made for each other. They complement each other both physically and socially. In contrast, homosexual relationships are unnatural and do not

contribute to the growth of society. In fidelity to the teachings of Christ, the Catholic Church opposes homosexual activity and state approval of homosexual relationships.

<http://www.gwcatholics.com/resources/hottopics/same-sex-marriage/the-church-and-same-sex-marriage/>

Therefore, for the Glory of God and the Unity of the Church there should be no changes to the Marriage Canon which is faithful not only to the Word of God, but also to the teachings of the universal and historic Church.

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