

Sacred Marriage: Holy & Heterosexual

- I. Cultural Assault on Holy Marriage (Gen. 1-2; Mt. 19; Eph. 5).
 - A. Living Together (1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4).
 - B. Marriage Contracts instead of Covenants (Gen. 2).
 - C. Homosexual Marriage.
 1. Homosexuality is sin (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Jude 6-7; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-29).
 2. Homosexuality does not produce offspring (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 127-128).
 3. Homosexuality removes gender distinctions (Gen. 1-2; Deut. 22:5; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22-33)
- II. Cultural Assault on Heterosexual Marriage
 - A. It's a Civil Rights Issue.
 - B. Why Would We Write Discrimination Into the Constitution...?
 - C. Homosexual relationships are no different than heterosexual ones.
 - D. AIDS is as much of a risk for heterosexuals as it is for homosexuals.
 - E. Homosexuals are normal, healthy, everyday people.
 - F. The Bible doesn't condemn homosexuality – only promiscuity.
 - G. Homosexuality is inborn.
 1. Simon LeVay and the hypothalamus
 2. Twins
 3. Genes
 - H. Homosexuality cannot be changed.
 - I. 10 percent of the population is gay. Could so many people be wrong?
 - J. It has no negative impact on heterosexual marriage, children, family, or American culture
 1. Children Need Fathers And Mothers: Same-sex marriage deliberately creates motherless or fatherless families.
 2. Children Pay a High Price if Marriage is Not Protected.
 3. To Protect Parental Rights for School Children.
 4. Marriage Leads to Prosperity.
 5. Marriage is a Social Institution.
 6. To Uphold Federal Marriage Law.
 7. To Protect Democracy from activist judges seeking to redefine marriage.
 8. To Preserve Religious Freedom.
 9. To Sustain the Population.
 10. If Marriage is Everything, Then Marriage is Nothing.

Discussion Questions:

1. Many people today are saying that “sexuality” is a cultural issue and the culture of today is different than the culture of the Bible. They claim that what was “natural” many centuries ago is not necessarily “natural” in today’s culture. Read Genesis 1-2 and Romans 1. Is God’s view of sexuality based on culture that changes or something that is universal and permanent? If we allow the idea that culture can determine what is right and/or wrong what might happen next to “marriage”?
2. Some people say that homosexuality is good as long as people are committed to one long-term relationship. What is wrong with that argument? Does the length of commitment to something automatically make it right? Who sets the standard for what is right?
3. Some homosexual advocates are claiming that the Bible does not condemn loving homosexual relationships. They say that it merely condemns cultic forms of homosexual prostitution that was occurring during the times of the Bible (claiming a “detestable act” was prostitution or rape). Read Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13. What does the passage clearly say? How would that have been understood by the people of Israel when it was originally written?
4. One of the major points used to support homosexual marriages is the claim that “people are born that way.” Is there current scientific “proof” that people are born that way? Even if there was found to be a genetic cause for “homosexual desires,” would that automatically make it good / right / okay / moral to practice homosexual behaviors? Why or why not? (Please see Romans 1; Gal. 5:16-24; Eph. 4:17-24; James 1:13-15)
5. What does the word “tolerant” mean? Does it mean the same as “approve”? When people are called “intolerant” because they don’t “approve” of specific behaviors, is that a fair accusation? If we have to “tolerate” every behavior what will we be able to legislate? What standard will be used to determine things that are “intolerable”?
6. Why do you think the homosexual community believes that heterosexual, evangelical Christians are “homophobic”? What have believers done to deserve this title? What can be done to demonstrate love and grace toward people who are involved in homosexual behavior? Does love and grace mean that we accept their behavior and tell them it is okay?
7. Is “marriage” sacred? What can be done to strengthen marriages in this church so that our marriages are a positive testimony to the watching world? What one specific thing can you do this week to strengthen your marriage? What can you do this week to encourage & strengthen other marriages in this church?

The Ten Declarations For Protecting Biblical Marriage
Principles to Unite, Focus and Ground Us During This Precarious Season

1. God loves all people, therefore we love all people, and we will do so regardless of how some view or define themselves sexually. We choose to love those who, for whatever reason, have chosen to involve themselves in homosexual or other unbiblical sexual activity. Authentic inclusivity means loving all persons, without the need to compromise biblical integrity. We openly welcome into our lives as friends and into our churches those who are struggling with same-sex attraction or who are entrenched in that lifestyle, with a sincere hope that they might turn to Christ and be transformed, and join with all of us in the process of being ever more conformed to the truth of the Bible. Genuine, biblically-founded tolerance means not only that we must love those who are actively involved in the homosexual lifestyle, but would include them loving us, without placing demands upon us to renounce our biblical convictions. We are open to meaningful, loving, non-inflammatory dialogue. Our primary question to the homosexual agenda advocates is “will you coach us on how to talk with you in a non-condescending way which both values you and allows us not to violate our biblical convictions?”
2. The Bible defines marriage as a covenantal union of one male and one female, which provides the foundation for healthy, whole family life. God’s Word is unabashedly resolute regarding this. We will avoid unproductive arguments with those who, through the use of casuistry and rationalization, revise biblical passages in order to condone the practice of homosexuality or other sexual sins. Biblical texts assert, and contemporary sociological research confirms, that maximal sexual fulfillment occurs within one man-one woman monogamous, covenantal relationships. Biblical texts assert, and biology confirms that procreation, the sustaining of the human race, occurs exclusively within the male-female union. Furthermore, boys and girls need and deserve to have a daddy and a mommy who love each other and who are committed to each other in marriage. God established marriage between Adam, a male, and Eve, a female, as the pattern for all time. Marriage of a man and woman was established by God at the beginning of creation. Jesus assumed and positively affirmed this standard. Historic, orthodox Christianity has affirmed this for two millennia.
3. While the Bible may not address sexual orientation, it does, however, clearly address sexual actions. We are not surprised by, nor unsympathetic toward those who are confused and/or struggling with their sexuality. We all live in a fallen world and the effects of sin are multifaceted. But sexual actions, choices and practices are to be holy and pure before God. Biblically understood and Godhonoring sexual expression is reserved for one man and one woman in a monogamous, covenantal, life-long marriage. We will not expend endless energy debating what people claim they “are” (homosexual). We focus instead on what persons choose to “do” (homosexual acts). With that established, it is inappropriate to compare homosexual marriage to interracial marriages. Race is a fact of birth. A homosexual act is that – an act. Acts involve choices.
4. We choose to be Christ-like even when we are falsely accused and slandered. When accused by those who reject God’s truth, we will, by God’s grace, boldly continue to work diligently and faithfully for the Bible’s definition of marriage, while responding truthfully in love to those who choose to criticize. “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Prov. 15:1). With Christ’s patient help, we shall attempt to evidence “a gentle answer” to all.
5. As the Church, we repent of our nation’s moral condition. Blame shifting is not allowed on the part of Bible believing Christians. The reason for our present dilemma is not ultimately assertive and demanding homosexuals, or biblically ignorant judges, or even a scripturally devoid electorate. It is ultimately a spiritually impotent church, which through failure to adequately teach and model authentic Christianity, allowed and caused ungodly persons to be elected, who in turn selected unbiblical judges. We repent of our apathy, our lethargy and our spiritual ineffectiveness. Our coming

together is, in part, a statement of repentance regarding our competitiveness and disunity. We declare our unity in Christ. Each of us must leave our ego and logo “at the door.”

6. Ultimately, we cry out for spiritual renewal in our state, nation and world. Winning a defense of marriage vote is of prime importance in the short term. But long term spiritual renewal, revival and evangelism are ultimately the answer, and are the reason for which we band together. While the church is the force for righteousness in the culture, its ultimate purpose is to glorify God by bringing persons into relationship with the Father.
7. We refuse the false choice between spiritual and temporal means, since both are used to advance Christ’s Kingdom. While we will diligently urge persons who understand truth to register and vote, we give ourselves to teaching the Word (including the topic of marriage), the sacraments, prayer, fasting, intercession, personal holy living, and the standard Christian disciplines. We may vote Republican, Democrat or Independent, but ultimately we belong to the “Jesus Party.” We function within existing political parties for the exclusive reason of having the greatest biblical impact on the culture as possible.
8. We repent of our failure to adequately and effectively protect biblical, heterosexual marriage. The divorce rate is an abomination to God, a curse on the world and nation, and is an anathema to us. We repent of our failure to adequately sanctify marriages in a way that would cause them to endure the pressures of daily temptations and duress.
9. Being approved by persons is not to be valued over the conformity to God’s will, ways and Word. Succinctly stated, we will not be people pleasers. We choose to be bold, yet loving; firm, yet compassionate. We will not be intimidated by the attacks of those who oppose biblical marriage, whether they are the government, the media or those who violate biblical, sexual purity. We understand that political correctness and biblical integrity are incompatible. While we cannot attend or participate in so-called homosexual “marriage” ceremonies, we do and can affirm the value of all persons, and we fully understand the difference. We unashamedly distinguish between that which might be called “marriage” by civil authorities, and that which was established as marriage by God in his Word. In terms of historical sequence, God established marriage, under his Sovereign direction, long before matrimony was recognized by the state.
10. By God’s strength and grace, we will be faithful... to the end. With Christ’s abiding presence and by the Spirit’s enabling power, we will walk in faithfulness and unity, while demonstrating endurance= that will be pleasing to God. We envision victory in reestablishing the sanctity of one man-one woman marriage in our world. If, in the process, we are persecuted for remaining true to God’s Word, we will endure. We will never abandon His Word. We will never capitulate or compromise. If we are harassed, jailed, imprisoned, driven underground or even killed, we will be found worthy of joining the saints and martyrs who have gone before us. Whether here or in the world to come, due to our unswerving dedication to our heavenly Father, His Word, and to our King and Savior Jesus, we shall overcome.

Our Solemn Agreement, June 25, 2008

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