

TRAINING

38 October 12th 2013

FORGUYYS

Gay Marriage?

Summary so far

We've looked at the Bible's teaching on homosexuality. From this I have concluded that same-sex sexual activity is wrong, but so too has been the way the Church has treated and spoken about people who are homosexual. We are called to love and point to Jesus, not condemn and turn people away. But strong male-male relationships are also cool for cats.

**ALL SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS
TAKEN FROM NIV UNLESS
OTHERWISE INDICATED**



In many ways this is a completely different issue to the stuff we have been considering in previous weeks.

The Government has a duty of care for all its people, and finding ways of honouring commitment between people is important.

Relatively recently the concept of *Civil Partnerships* was introduced to do just this. At the time it was recognised that you cannot easily redefine marriage to include same sex partnerships.

Good laws take time to develop, bad laws are those that are rushed and ill thought through, or

which come about because of an ideological mantra. "Gay Marriage" was not in the manifesto of any party at the last election, but suddenly became the 'thing that must be done' and the legislation was enacted with great haste.

The problem is the word Marriage, not the word Gay. Given that the law already recognised Gay commitment with Civil Partnerships - and most churches and Christians were content with this - the question was whether it was possible or not to extend marriage to this.

The elements of Marriage have, until now, always included concepts such as *consummation*, and *faithfulness/fidelity*. As I understand it, those were the sticking points as they tried to include homosexual partnerships into the definition of marriage.

What does it mean for a gay relationship to be consummated? How can you specify what the sex act actually is for two men or two women?

How can you define faithfulness, when a man might go out for the night with other men anyway? Given that the sex act is not clearly



defined in the first place, how would a court of law decide if one partner said the other had been unfaithful on a night out with someone else?

So what has happened is that the legislation for Gay Marriage has been passed, but *marriage* has been redefined for Gay relationships to exclude the concepts of consummation and faithfulness.

This weakens marriage for all. I doubt it will be long before there are legal challenges that argue that since adultery does not apply in same-sex marriages as a ground for divorce, it no longer should in traditional marriages. As you will see on the next page, it all got very confused in the parliamentary debates.

Marriage has been weakened by a doctrinal push of an agenda (hastened by other

European countries making similar changes and the requirement for normalisation across the EU), had there been more time and no ideological pressure, then either there would have been a realisation that you simply cannot redefine marriage in this way or, perhaps, better legislation that would have enabled 'equality' for homosexuals without weakening marriage generally.

Marriage is one of the fundamental building blocks of society, providing a secure and stable unit for the husband and wife and also any children that might be born. I believe that this legislation has begun the job of demolishing that building block.

The problem has been that people have concentrated on the "two people love each other why should we stop them being in a committed relationship?" question instead of the "what does marriage really mean?". It's been happening for decades, spurred on by stories of celebrities 'marrying' for a few years and then 'marrying' someone else when the commitment gets boring/difficult. We have been forgetting what marriage is for a long time, perhaps even within the church.

The answer to this is not to protest against the government but to demonstrate clearly the true meaning of marriage both with our own wives and also as the Church in our teaching about it. Being positive about what marriage *is* rather than on what it is *not*. So maybe, that is a good cue to end this piece here!

The Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, which caused dramatic changes to divorce law, retained adultery in Section 1 as the first ground, together with irretrievable breakdown, and it remains the law today. Adultery may not be seen as such a serious matrimonial offence today as it was in earlier times, but that, in my view, is a mistaken approach.....I consider it profoundly unsatisfactory and, more importantly, profoundly unjust that adultery is not a ground for same-sex divorce. It undermines the value of same-sex marriage. Why is this the case? I assume that it is because there has not so far been a definition of consummation of a sexual relationship other than between couples of the opposite sex. This is a failure to come to terms with more than one type of sexual relationship and a broader definition of the consummation of a relationship. Baroness Butler-Sloss, House of Lords.



Lady Stowell replied to a question raised by Baroness Butler-Sloss for the Government: "In terms of the law, marriage does not require the fidelity of couples."

"It is open to each couple to decide for themselves on the importance of fidelity within their own relationship."

But Tory MP David Burrowes, a critic of the same-sex marriage Bill, said: "This goes against everything the PM has said about his desire to try and strengthen marriage by extending marriage to same sex couples."

GAG-ON-A-STICK

HERE are some of the competition runners-up:

- Why are crabs trying to take over the sea? Because they're shellfish.
- What did the buffalo say to his child when he was leaving for university? Bison.
- What is Bilbo Baggins's favourite part of a cooker? The hob bit.
- Why did the cow get thrown out of the darts competition? Because she hit a bull's eye.
- Why did the cheese maker walk with a limp? Because he only had one stilton.
- Where did Noah keep all the fish? In his multi-storey carp ark.

Bible Study Series

We continue our series on **Ephesians ch 5:1-20**

How do we live with spiritual integrity in a culture that embraces sin so readily?

Read the passage, and go to www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts to join in.

“I know I shouldn't be sleeping with my girlfriend, but God knows I just can't help it, He loves me anyway”. There is a little truth there mixed with a huge misunderstanding that amounts to a lie.

Just a few more thoughts following on from last week on this.

A casual attitude towards sin is very damaging. Yes, God forgives. Yes, He loves you. But actually we are not islands.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 8: *9Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling-block to the weak.*

10 For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be

emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols?

11 So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge.

12 When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

He's not even talking about sin. He's talking about freedom from the Law and saying that if, when you understand you are free you do something that causes someone with a lesser understanding problems, you shouldn't do it.

Lyrics featuring the word **gay**

Monday's child is fair of face...

But the child born on the Sabbath Day,
Is fair and wise and good and gay

Villikins and His Dinah,

"Go dress yourself Dinah in gorgeous array
For I've got you yon husband both gallant and gay"

Deck the Halls...

Don we now our gay apparel...fa la la la la



The Flintstones

When you're with the
Flintstones
you'll have a yabba dabba
doo time.
A dabba doo time.
You'll have a gay old time.

How much more with sin!

People watch you. Younger Christians. Non-believers.

You are an ambassador for Christ. A signpost towards Him.

If people look at you and don't see Jesus, then you are muddying the image of Christ and making it harder for people to approach Him.

If, instead of the Way, the Truth and the Life they see something false then all your conversations with them are wasted. You are not pointing to Jesus.

But it's ok, you say, my sin is secret. No-one knows what I am looking at on my computer or doing in private.

God knows. The Enemy knows. You are still becoming blurred as a picture of Christ. One of the C of E confessions includes the words ***We have wounded your love and marred your image in us.***

The point is, don't treat sin casually. We all do it, we're all forgiven. But don't stop battling to overcome. Jesus said *Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching* (John 14:23). Let's go on loving Him, and spurring each other to love Him more. Encourage each other to love Him, and help each other when we get trapped by sin.

***That's
quite enough Gay
Sex for one autumn I feel.
Unless you have anything to
add (www.tfgministries.org.uk/
facebook)***

***There won't be anything next week as
I won't have time... but if you have a
question to tackle the week after
let me know. If you want to write
something to publish on
here let me have it
too.***