

# Same-Sex Marriage (3)<sup>1</sup>

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*Same-sex marriage advocates say that anyone who has a committed loving relationship with someone, even if of the same sex, should be allowed to have their relationship recognized as marriage.*

Because God's design for marriage has been widely scorned and dismissed in our society, it is a relatively small step to cave in to demands for same-sex marriage. Same-sex marriage advocates say that anyone who has a committed loving relationship with someone, even if of the same sex, should be allowed to have their relationship recognized as marriage.

However, it is important to see that same-sex marriage is totally antithetical and hostile to what God said marriage should be. Same-sex marriage is blatantly against every design of the Almighty for wedlock. It is also completely against what society has almost universally throughout history considered marriage to be.

God said that marriage is for male and female. God designed the two genders in such a way that they complement and complete each other, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Indeed, although the unity of marriage is more than the physical, this unity cannot be separated from the sexual and the sexual cannot be separated from procreation. Marriage is where God wanted the begetting of children to take place. Marriage is the place where the father and mother each have a role to play in procreation and nurture. Marriage is where it's at. That's where society has its foundation.

However, the same-sex view of marriage could not be more different. Whereas God brought together male and female, same-sex marriage is about

two of the same gender coming together. Whereas God instituted marriage to beget children, same-sex advocates say procreation has nothing to do with marriage. Whereas God designed male and female organs so that they are meant for each other, same-sex marriage practices sex that is contrary to the Creator's design.

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It is a small wonder that God severely condemns homosexual behaviour in his Word. For example, the apostle Paul includes in his list of those who will not inherit the kingdom of God also practicing homosexuals (1 Cor 6:9). God condemned homosexual practice to protect the creation ordinance of marriage and the integrity of the family (Lev 18:22, Lev 20:13). All this means that same-sex marriage is in open rebellion against God and his ordinances, and therefore it has disastrous consequences for society. Let us consider three such results.

## Redefinition of marriage

Because same-sex marriage has nothing to do with the gift God gave humankind at the beginning of the history of this world, the implication is that if same-sex marriage becomes accepted by society, we are in danger of ultimately losing the institution of marriage as God ordained it and as we now know it. It is as simple as that.<sup>2</sup> The gay lobby's claims are untrue: that same-sex marriage is just an addition to what marriage already is. Honest homosexuals acknowledge this to be the case, and lesbians and gays admit that same-sex marriage will be subversive of marriage as we now know it. The social engineering that is inherent in the same-sex project necessitates the reconfiguring of marriage and creates many new questions. Should any two people who wish to get "married" because they love each other then not be given the privilege of a marriage relationship? Could not a loving brother and sister marry each other, or a loving father and son? It is of interest that the same-sex issue also seems to have encouraged the promotion of polygamy (more than one wife or husband) and polyamory (an open relationship with as many people in one household as you wish to love). Why should marriage be limited to two people? Why not have an open marriage, a group experience? On what ground would or could you say no to that, if love and commitment to each other is the *only* basis for marriage? If we lose

society's traditional understanding of marriage and it becomes whatever individuals prefer it to mean, the consequences could be enormous. These consequences will not be immediately apparent, but will gradually come about. Not surprisingly there are, therefore, even gays who oppose same-sex marriage because of the potential far-reaching ramifications for the way society orders itself.<sup>3</sup>

One implication of redefining marriage in accordance with the gay agenda is that a radical individualism would develop. What determines a normal household and what is permitted sexually will all be up to the individual. Everything will go. There will be few norms left for the state to enforce. Because homosexual relationships are generally very tenuous, have more violence, and fall apart very readily,<sup>4</sup> same-sex marriage will tend to undermine fidelity across the board, also in normal marriages. A society that tolerates all manner of sexual promiscuity is a threat to stable families.

Radical individualism is the opposite of marriage as God designed it. On a purely secular level one can see this.<sup>5</sup> Marriage is premised on the joining of a male and a female. The strong benefit of marriage is that male and female are designed with profound differences, and these differences are coordinated in marriage so that each contributes what the other lacks. Together they create something larger than themselves. Think of a violin and a bow, the wooden rod with horsehairs stretched from end to end. By themselves a violin or bow cannot do much. Two bows together cannot create music, only mirroring each other because they are the same. They don't complement each other. But together, in their differences, they create something far greater than they can alone. It is much the same with two parts of humanity: male and female. Marriage is the coming together of the two different parts to make a whole. Same-sex unions do not make a human whole. They are

missing a necessary human ingredient, either male or female.

This is not just a matter of reproduction. The interaction between male and female provides huge and irreplaceable benefits for both because the differences of gender are rooted in every part of our being. Male and female are not interchangeable human parts. They are completely different identities and they normally need each other to be complete. Love and commitment alone do not form a marriage; it requires two different genders. Indeed, we saw in the first article of this series that this is how God designed it. To redefine the marriage relationship is to court disaster, also for society at large.

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Part of this disaster is that the redefinition of marriage and the individualism inherent in the phenomenon of same-sex marriage will bring into jeopardy the position of children.

## The place of children

It is the little ones who really pay the price. Technically, there is no room for them in same-sex marriage. Advocates of same-sex marriage say that marriage has nothing to do with babies or procreation or getting mothers and fathers for children.<sup>6</sup> After all, it is all about doing what you like as adults together. It's not because of children that same sex couples are formed. Personal pleasure, not raising children, is the agenda.

Of course there are some same-sex couples that want children, but naturally cannot produce offspring on their own. So, you have situations where a child is desired and artificial means of conception are used with a sperm or egg donation from a third party. After all, if traditional marriages have children, why can't same sex ones have children if they wish? It's their right as married people.

But, is it fair for a child to be raised in an environment which by nature has nothing to do with procreation? How will that affect such a child? Already there are legal horror stories as courts try to figure out who the parents are in custody battles involving same sex relationships.<sup>7</sup> Further, a child needs to know its real father and mother. Adopted children often search for their birth parents because of the need to know who they are. But a child growing up in a same-sex context may never know who



its biological parents are and such a child will never have both a father and mother care for it.

Study after study has shown that children need both a father and a mother to get a balanced and proper upbringing and an understanding of their own identity. For example, little boys who grow up in the absence of a father conclude that being a man means being as unlike a woman as possible and so become aggressive. Children raised outside a traditional marriage are at substantially greater risk for just about every negative outcome that social scientists can measure. They are more likely, for example, to fail at school, suffer physical and mental problems, become victims of child abuse, and become juvenile delinquents. Affirming a same-sex life style will also encourage pedophilic activity.<sup>8</sup> But realize, same-sex marriage is not about providing a safe place for children but about having sexual freedom recognized by society.

Marriage as an institution has been the place where children are to be protected, nurtured, loved, and grow up with a clear identity and view of their place in society. That would drastically change if same-sex marriage were legally recognized. Children will be de-linked from their biological past and have no more than a shadowy connection with larger kinship groups. Blood, gender, and kinship ties will all be de-emphasized to the detriment of the child, his identity, and his place in society. Most likely the state will end up raising the children of same-sex marriages. Marriage will no longer be generational and genealogical. It will no longer bind together the past and the future.

A third result of same-sex marriage that can be mentioned is the destruction it will create.

## Destructive consequences

The medical consequences of redefining marriage to include same-sex are potentially devastating. Society fights alcoholism because of the destruction it causes; it also has a duty to fight homosexual behaviour because of the even worse devastation it generates, both to the persons directly involved and to society as a whole. Studies have shown that homosexuals have a twenty-five to thirty year decrease in life expectancy compared to the population at large. Gays expose themselves to a whole array of diseases including liver disease, infectious hepatitis, AIDS, rectal cancer, as well as a higher rate of suicide and mental illness.<sup>9</sup> It does not show neighbourly love to ignore such health risks in the lives of fellow citizens.

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## *Show the world what the redeeming work of Christ means for our marriages and families.*

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Furthermore, and more importantly, same-sex marriages will further subject our society to God's judgment. There is no blessing on this. To the contrary, it brings a curse to society, as one can see not only on the health side of the issue, but also in the weakening of the family and the fabric that holds society together as a whole.

## What should we do?

What should we, who wish to defend marriage as God ordained it, do in the present situation? The following come to mind.

1. We should start at home and show the world what the redeeming work of Christ means for our marriages and families. Our marriages should mirror the love of Christ and his church (Eph 5:21-33). Our marriages and families should be beacons of hope in a dark world so that people ask us the reason for our joy (1 Pet 3:15). Being a salt in society is an important way to influence it. As Christians we can give struggling homosexuals hope with the gospel. There is no bondage from which the Spirit of our risen Saviour cannot deliver. He is all powerful and He can do it (1 Cor 6:9-11).
2. Emphasize to others that we are not defending our pet concepts but God's design for marriage. He ordained it and to Him we should listen. God's rights always take precedence over imagined human rights! He has spoken clearly in his Word, and his Word gives us the authority to speak up on this issue. And does not the preamble to our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms explicitly recognize that "Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God"?
3. Wherever possible we should oppose the loose sexual morals of the day and support all initiatives promoting chastity. We should show why unbiblical morals are bad for society. At the same time we must honour the right of others to disagree with us and show Christian love to our opponents. We seek not to put down fellow citizens but to honour God. We must show compassion to those who struggle with sexual sin. We are all sinners needing the grace of God.



## Church News

Made available for call and recommended to the churches:

### Rev. W. Bredenhof

Rev. W. Bredenhof has been made available for call with the recommendation of the consistory of the Canadian Reformed Church of Smithers, BC, due to family circumstances that make him unable to continue with the specific work of a missionary in Fort Babine.

4. If you know someone who is a member of a church that promotes gay marriage and advocates it in government forums, you should help that person to protest vigorously and to point their leaders to what Scripture teaches. It is a horrible thing that in our country those who say they speak for the Christian church are actually contradicting God's Word. The damage they do is catastrophic. Their testimony should be challenged.
5. We need to work on the political front, for government has a role. According to Scripture, government is to be God's servant for good and to oppose evil (Rom 13:4). Write and lobby your elected representatives. They have a responsibility. We should also be ready to recognize the political realities and work with others for realistic or attainable solutions in areas we agree.<sup>10</sup> It would be good to organize a meeting of like-minded people in which the concerns of same-sex marriage and what to do about them are addressed. We must get more involved in the political process and agenda of our nation and let our voice be heard more forcefully.

### Suggestions for further reading

Daniel Cere and Douglas Farrow, eds., *Divorcing Marriage. Unveiling the Dangers in Canada's New Social Experiment*, (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004)

Glenn T. Stanton and Bill Maier, *Marriage on Trial. The Case against Same-sex Marriage and Parenting*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004)

Useful resources can be found at: <http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/resources/index.asp>

<sup>1</sup>A short version of this material was presented at "Ignite our Culture

Conference" in Burlington, Ontario, on November 13, 2004, sponsored by Equipping Christians for the Public Square Centre.

<sup>2</sup>For this topic and for what follows in this paragraph see Daniel Cere, *Redefining Marriage? A Case for Caution*, (2003), p. 9-10. Available at

[www.marriageinstitute.ca/pages/issues.htm](http://www.marriageinstitute.ca/pages/issues.htm) (search under Cere). Dr. Cere teaches at McGill and the paper referred to here is a revised version of submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. See also Maggie Gallagher "What Marriage is For", *The Weekly Standard* vol. 8, issue 45, (2003). Available at [www.weeklystandard.com](http://www.weeklystandard.com)

<sup>3</sup>See, e.g., Katherine Young and Paul Nathanson, "Answering Advocates of Gay Marriage" *The Australian Family*, (July and November 2003), especially "Claim 20" in the November article. Available at [www.family.org.au/journal/2003/j20031103.html](http://www.family.org.au/journal/2003/j20031103.html)

<sup>4</sup>E.g., in a 1970 survey of 1,000 homosexual in the San Francisco area, it was found that 84% of white and 77% of black homosexual males had 50 or more homosexual partners in their life time. Only 3% of white and 9% of black homosexuals had fewer than 10 homosexual partners during their lifetime. See Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), p. 453. Figures from a 1997 Australian study and 1994 Dutch study are similar. (Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, p. 455-456.) On violence and stability, also see *When Two Become One: The Unique Nature and Benefits of Marriage*, 2nd ed., (Markham: Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, 2003), p. 19.

<sup>5</sup>What follows is based on G. L. Stanton and B. Maier, *Marriage on Trial. The Case Against Same-sex Marriage and Parenting* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004) p. 24-25.

<sup>6</sup>This position has even resulted, for example, in the high court of Vermont explicitly ruling that marriage in the state of Vermont has nothing to do with procreation. See Maggie Gallagher "What Marriage is For", *The Weekly Standard* vol. 8, issue 45 (2003) p. 3. Available at [www.weeklystandard.com](http://www.weeklystandard.com)

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Chuck Colson, "The Wisdom of Solomon", *Breakpoint with*

*Charles Colson*, August 11, 2004. Available at [www.FamilyPart.ON.CA](http://www.FamilyPart.ON.CA) (go to library, news, family, "family redefinition hurts children").

<sup>8</sup>See Maggie Gallagher, *Testimony on the Marriage Affirmation and Protection Amendment* (H3190), (Massachusetts Statehouse, April 28, 2003), p. 1-2. Available at [www.marriageinstitute.ca/pages/issues.htm](http://www.marriageinstitute.ca/pages/issues.htm).

Also, see, for example, K. D. Pruet, *Fatherhood. Why Father Care is As Essential As Mother Care for Your Child* (New York: Free Press, 2000). For sexual abuse of children or pedophilia, see Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, p. 479-480.

<sup>9</sup>See Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, p. 472-473. On mental illness, the Netherlands Mental Health Survey and Incidence Study reported in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* in 2001 that "people with same-sex sexual behavior are at greater risk for psychiatric disorders." This underlines the fact that the 1973 decision of the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders was politically motivated. This was not the result of new research. Peter Sprigg, "Homosexuality: The Threat to the Family and the Attack on Marriage" *Family Research Council Issue 99* (Oct 14, 2004). Available at

[www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=PD04F01&v=PRINT](http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=PD04F01&v=PRINT)

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, D.A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) p. 419.