

From John Barron, parishioner of St. Mark's Church, Barriefield

Personal Submission Regarding Canon 21

Marriage. Where did it originate? What's its purpose? In answering the Pharisees question concerning divorce Jesus said:

"Haven't you read", he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate." (Matt. 19:4-6)

Jesus, therefore upholds marriage in that:

- It is between a man and a woman, which excludes same sex marriage.
- It involves only two people, which excludes multiple partner marriages.
- Because the two become one flesh, adultery and divorce are not acceptable.
- Marriage is an institution created by God.

This last point needs to be stressed. Neither the state nor the church created marriage. God did.

The two becoming one flesh has both a physical and spiritual aspect that cannot be fulfilled through same-sex marriages. Paul elaborates on the spiritual aspect in Ephesians 5: 31-32 where he too refers back to the created, established order in Genesis:

" 'For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the Church."

Paul sees that marriage between a man and a woman is a spiritual reflection of the relationship between Christ and His bride (the Church). It is created by God, for man and a woman, for His purpose as part of His natural order.

All references to marriage in the Bible are always between a man and a woman.

Everyone, myself included of course, is broken, or 'bent' as C.S. Lewis states. By ourselves we do not align with God's plumb line. Each and every one of us is broken in some way. Brokenness is anything and everything that does not conform to God's original creation and established order. Homosexuality is a part of this brokenness. For broken man to 'formally' change (pervert) that which God has created in His name and declared 'Good', is extremely foolhardy, arrogant (or ignorant) and dangerous. The clay is trying to tell the potter how it should be formed.

By accepting and blessing same-sex marriage in God's name, the Church is demonstrating rebellion against the Creator of all things. It is attempting to make God fit into the world's broken standards. It is calling something evil, good. It is trying to make God in its own image.

By accepting and blessing same-sex marriage, the Church is conforming to the desires of this broken world instead of being Christ's salt and light. "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and

trampled by men." (Matt. 5:13) By accepting and blessing same-sex marriage, the church *is* being trampled by men.

By accepting and blessing same-sex marriage, the church, in that regard, is no longer a part of Christ's Church. It becomes man's church; man's church that preaches another Gospel. In fact, by so doing, the church is demonstrating its own brokenness.

By accepting and blessing same-sex marriage, the church is denying Christ's teaching and is placating itself to the world (and Satan is the Prince of this world).

If that should be the case, then I, and many others, will wipe the dust from our feet and clothes and move on.

Furthermore, if that should be the case, be prepared for God to remove His lampstand.

Sincerely,

In Christ,

John Barron