

## Why we must defend traditional marriage?

There's been a recent flurry of people coming out in favor of gay marriage.

- ⤴ President Obama
- ⤴ Hillary Clinton
- ⤴ American Academy of Pediatrics - all these are liberal, so not too surprising
- ⤴ Rob Portman – why? His son is gay
- ⤴ Rob Bell

There is a seeming avalanche of momentum toward the idea of normalizing same sex marriage.

Why? Politicians see it as a winning issue. Some church leaders look at it as inevitable and they don't want to lose touch with the culture. Rob Bell said "... this is the world we are living in and we need to affirm people wherever they are."<sup>1</sup>

Young people are leading the charge as surveys show large majorities of people under 30 supporting gay marriage. **(How many here 30 and under?)**

As of late the debate has changed such that support for traditional marriage is attacked as "hate speech". Opposition to SSM is consistently called bigotry. The equation has turned to talk of discrimination which has a chilling effect on the debate as those on the side of traditional marriage are delegitimized. What are we to do? Clearly some want to end the discussion and move on...

However, can we all agree here that you won't soon see an announcement from God saying he changed his mind? God is not like a man that he changes his mind (1 Sam 15:29).

While in all honesty this battle is not going well, I don't think we should give up. Not even if we lose the legal question. We must continue to defend God's design in marriage making two arguments – one to the church, and one to the world.

### ***First – Marriage was God's idea.***

It was intended for our good and for God's purposes. If we try to change that, we will not see the blessing of God in our lives. God gave marriage to reflect his image, to provide comfort and oneness to people, and to provide an environment for the raising of godly children.

### **First of all, God made marriage to reflect his image.**

Gen 1:27 So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He

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<sup>1</sup> "Evangelical author Rob Bell comes out in support of gay marriage" Niraj Warikoo, Detroit Free Press Staff Writer

created him; male and female He created them.

God created male and female. The two combined reflect the image of God. There is no mistake that God made males and females. Because of the brokenness of our culture and the ravages of sin many do experience gender confusion and same sex attraction. But that doesn't take away from the basic premise that this is God's perfect design.

God also has established that marriage is a **reflection of the relationship of Christ and the church.**

Eph 5:25-33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— <sup>30</sup> for we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."<sup>c</sup> <sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church.

So, male and female together reflect the image of God, and the husband and wife relationship specifically reflects the relationship of Christ to the church.

**Second, God gave marriage to provide oneness and comfort as male and female together rule the earth.**

Gen 2:18 And the LORD God said, "*It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Jesus reaffirmed this idea in Matt 19:4-6

<sup>4</sup> "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' <sup>5</sup> 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'? <sup>6</sup> So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

So marriage has the purpose of oneness as two dissimilar people, two corresponding parts meld into one. We're not the same, we bring different aspects into the mix. The two form a union which requires the complementary strengths and weaknesses of male and female to blend. Men are given certain tendencies as are women. Their differences are intended by God to go together.

Thirdly, God created marriage for his purpose of mankind ruling over creation. This involves the important aspect of having and raising children.

Gen 1:28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

They work together in God's image, part and counterpart, raising children to rule the earth. Now this doesn't just mean producing children, **but for the world in the next generation to be under the dominion of God, they must be godly offspring.** This requires godly marriages.

Mal 2:13-16 Another thing you do: You flood the LORD 's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. <sup>14</sup> You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

<sup>15</sup> Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

<sup>16</sup> "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty.

So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

God in his wisdom has established that a man and a woman, bonded together for life is the best thing for raising godly children. The mother is by nature more inclined toward her children. The father is needed to bring his strength and stability in providing for and raising children in the ways of the Lord. They are both vital, both necessary.

**Christians must be absolutely convinced of the need for marriage as an essential good for us as individuals and as a society.** We must also realize that it is not at all surprising that the devil has a massive worldwide scheme to destroy marriage. We must not roll over and die because this is such an important and foundational issue for our future.

Prov 24:10

If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!

<sup>11</sup> Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.

<sup>12</sup> If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?

But what about the people who aren't convinced by the authority of God's word? Do we simply give up and just let the tide roll over us like a massive wave?

I believe we have a responsibility to our culture as the witness to what is good and right.

Ezek 33:1-6

The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, <sup>3</sup> and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, <sup>4</sup> then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. <sup>5</sup> Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning, his blood will be on his own head. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself. <sup>6</sup> But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.'

Like the watchman on the wall we need to be unashamed of the truth, and we need to speak it in love because people are making destructive changes to the culture we live in. If we do not uphold the **image of God** reflected in marriage *God's witness to the world is greatly diminished*. If we don't teach people how to have the **true oneness** of biblical marriage, *they will miss out on the vital strength and comfort* that marriage can be. And if we don't have **stable homes raising godly children**, the next generation will continue to descend into a chaotic and destructive culture in which sex is casual, life is trivial, violence is rampant, and children are not welcome.

## ***Part II – Making the Case to the World***

So how do we make the case? We should of course should not hesitate to share God's intentions for marriage with the world, but we must also realize that spiritual things are only grasped by those who have the spirit of God. We also need to go beyond that to discuss the reality of what the consequences are for these choices. Scripture tells us to persuade, so that is what we do.

**"We need a social institution for attaching fathers to the mother-child bond," she says. "And for communicating to young people — in the midst of their sexual, romantic, erotic dramas — that they have a serious responsibility to try to get this great good for their children. And that's the heart of marriage as an idea."**<sup>2</sup>

**Repeat after me - "it's for the kids"**. What is the reason any culture takes any kind of position on marriage? It is because to have a stable society there has to be some means of bringing children up so that they can be functioning parts of society and obey the customs of our society

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<sup>2</sup> Mary Anne Gallagher, Co-founder of national organization for marriage

so we have order. We should not be in the business of marriage to do experiments on social order or to push a particular view of morality. A family with a mom and a dad who are in a committed relationship offers the best scenario for raising children to become stable members of society. **The reasons I'm going to give you will be a snap to remember.** Just remember SNAP – Stable, Need, Analysis, and Peaceful.

**Stable** – traditional marriage, even while decimated by divorce, is still a more stable environment than SS unions.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2001), about 58% of traditional marriages last longer than 20 years. Comparatively, according to a 2003-2004 Gay/Lesbian Consumer Online Census, about 5% of same-sex unions last longer than 20 years.

According to multiple sources, traditional marriage is far less promiscuous than SS unions. 85% of married women and 75.5% of married men report being faithful to their spouses. For homosexual males, the number is 5%.<sup>3</sup>

**Need – kids need both a mom and a dad.**

Quote from Dr Trayce Hansen:

According to decades of research, the ideal family structure for children is a two-parent, mother-father family.(1,2,3) That research consistently shows that children raised in such families are more likely to thrive—psychologically, mentally, and physically—than children reared in any other kind of family configuration.

Extensive research also reveals that not only mothers, but also fathers, are critical to the healthy development of children. Swedish researchers ... found that *fathers reduce behavioral problems in boys and psychological problems in girls, enhance cognitive development, and decrease delinquency.*(4)

...Mothers and fathers simply aren't interchangeable. Two women can both be good mothers, but neither can be a good father. One-sex parenting, whether by a single parent or a homosexual couple, deprives children of the full range of parenting offered by dual-sex couples. Only mother-father families afford children the opportunity to develop relationships with a parent of the same, as well as the opposite sex. Relationships with both sexes early in life make it easier and more comfortable for a child to relate to both sexes later in life. Overall, having a relationship with both a male and female parent increases the likelihood that a child will have successful social and romantic relationships during his or her life.<sup>4</sup>

**Analysis** – Studies consistently show children from a mother/father marriage do best. Studies of children raised in single-sex families either show negative results or there is insufficient data from which to conclude.

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3 “A secular case against gay marriage”, winteryknight.wordpress.com, 06/27/2011

4 “Same-Sex Marriage: Not in the Best Interest of Children”, Trayce Hansen, Ph.D., May/June 2009 issue of “The Therapist,” a publication of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists

Again quoting Dr Hansen:

Certainly homosexual couples can be just as loving toward children as heterosexual couples, but children need more than love. They require the distinctive qualities and complementary natures of a male and female parent. The accumulated wisdom of over 5,000 years concludes that the ideal marital and parental configuration is composed of one man and one woman. This time-tested wisdom is now supported by the most advanced, scientifically sound research available. Importantly, and to their credit, many self-proclaimed pro-same-sex-marriage researchers acknowledge that there is as of yet no definitive evidence as to the impact of homosexual parenting on children. Regardless, some of those advocates support same-sex marriage because they believe it offers a natural laboratory in which to assess the long-term impact on children.(24) {In other words, let's try it out. - my addition} That position is unconscionable and indefensible.

Same-sex marriage isn't in the best interest of children. While we may empathize with those homosexuals who long to be married and parent children, we mustn't allow our compassion for them to trump our compassion for children. *In a contest between the desires of some homosexuals and the needs of all children, we cannot allow the children to lose. {emphasis mine}*<sup>5</sup>

### **Peaceful – traditional mother/father marriage is the safest place for mothers to raise children**

- The institution that most strongly protects mothers and children from domestic abuse and violent crime is marriage.
- For example, the incidence of spousal, boyfriend, or domestic partner abuse is twice as high among mothers who have never been married as it is among mothers who have ever married (including those separated or divorced).
- Moreover, children of divorced or never married mothers are six to 30 times more likely to suffer from serious child abuse than are children raised by both biological parents in marriage.<sup>6</sup>

So let's review S-N-A-P.

- ⤴ Stable – longer lasting relationships and more commitment.
- ⤴ Need – kids need both a mother and a father for proper development
- ⤴ Analysis – married mother/father families are proven to work, SS families are unproven
- ⤴ Peaceful – mothers and children are safest from violence in married mother/father homes

### ***Expect some pushback***

The debate has now changed to a civil rights issue. It's about equal rights and discrimination. Here's a good way to say it:

“People have a right to live as they choose, they don't have the right to redefine marriage for all of us.”<sup>7</sup>

Some good answers to other tough questions from the National Organization for Marriage:

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- 5 “Same-Sex Marriage: Not in the Best Interest of Children”, Trayce Hansen, Ph.D., May/June 2009 issue of “The Therapist,” a publication of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
  - 6 “Marriage: Still the Safest Place For Women and Children”, By Robert Rector, Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D. and Kirk A. Johnson, Ph.D., March 9, 2004
  - 7 SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: Answering the Toughest Questions, National Organization for Marriage.

## 2. Isn't the ban on gay marriage like bans on interracial marriage?

**A:** "Bans on interracial marriage were about keeping two races apart so that one race could oppress the other. Marriage is about bringing two sexes together, so that children get the love of their own mom and a dad, and women don't get stuck with the enormous disadvantages of parenting alone." "Having a parent of two different races is just not the same as being deprived of your mother—or your father."

## 4. What's the harm from SSM? "How can Adam and Steve hurt your marriage?"

**A:** "If courts rule that same-sex marriage is a civil right, then, people like you and me who believe children need moms and dads will be treated like bigots and racists."

"When the idea that children need moms and dads get legally stigmatized as bigotry, the job of parents and faith communities trying to transmit a marriage culture to their kids is going to get a lot harder."

## 5. Why do you want to interfere with love?

**A:** "Love is a great thing. But marriage isn't just any kind of love; it's the special love of husband and wife for each other and their children."

## 7. Isn't divorce the real threat to marriage?

**A:** "High rates of divorce are one more reason we should be strengthening marriage, not conducting radical social experiments on it."

## 8. Are you saying gays cannot be good parents?

**A:** "Two men might each be a good father, but neither can be a mom. The ideal for children is the love of their own mom and dad. No same-sex couple can provide that."

## 9. What about older or infertile couples? If they marry why not same-sex couples?

**A:** "Every man and woman who marries is capable of giving any child they create (or adopt) a mother and a father. No same-sex couple can do this. It's apples and oranges."<sup>8</sup>

## ***Do this in the name of the Lord***

We should be respectful, but engaging. Not afraid of the fight, but knowing that children will suffer if we lose this battle.

### 2 Tim 2:24-26

<sup>24</sup> And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, <sup>25</sup> in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, <sup>26</sup> and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

I am urging everyone here to see yourself as part of this army. More minds and hearts are changed at the dinner table or the break room table than anywhere else. Arm yourself with arguments, don't lose heart remember. It's for the kids – SNAP.

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8 SAME-SEX MARRIAGE: Answering the Toughest Questions, National Organization for Marriage.