MARRIAGE: A LIFETIME HETEROSEXUAL UNION BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN

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Introduction

As October 6, 2014 came to a close, one of the greatest battles in the war on traditional marriage ended to little fanfare, and same-sex marriage proponents had won a tremendous victory without firing a shot. By refusing to hear any one of the seven cases placed before them regarding same-sex marriage, the United States Supreme Court allowed decisions in various states to stand; thereby permitting the practice. It also provided for the beginning of these types of events in states where appeals to ban gay marriage had been struck down. Couples in these states no longer have to wait for a Supreme Court decision to challenge the appeal on the ban and may now marry. When the highest court in the nation “under God” refuses to take a position on an issue of such magnitude, it sends a message to the states that it does not deem any argument presented to date against its practice compelling enough to hear.1 This argument from silence further legitimizes a sexual practice and union that is contrary to God’s design for marriage instituted in Genesis 2:22-24.

In the ten years since 2002, public acceptance of gay or lesbian relations in the United States has grown steadily. In 2012, a majority of 54% of Americans said

that they believed homosexual relationships to be morally acceptable.\textsuperscript{2} Advocates of the homosexual lifestyle, such as GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), portray those seeking to preserve the healthy, heterosexual view of marriage as both intolerant and bigoted.\textsuperscript{3} This condemnation of the morally correct position on the issue, combined with the growing support of gay marriage has created a social environment hostile to those seeking to live according to Biblical truth. These developments also create a slope from which further deviations may be made that is contrary to God’s design for marriage. Despite its legality in thirty-two states, same-sex marriage is a distortion of God’s design for heterosexuality in marriage as He intended for it to be a lifetime commitment between one man and one woman.

\textbf{The Gay Marriage Position}

One of the staunchest supporters of same-sex marriages is civil rights attorney Evan Wolfson, founder of Freedom to Marry, Inc. This organization has been instrumental in securing the legality of same-sex marriage in thirty-three states over the last ten years.\textsuperscript{4} The Freedom to Marry movement provides a specific

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“Roadmap to Victory” for its adherents to follow when presenting its position. The single most influential positional change that these individuals are trying to make is being done by a subliminal alteration of wording. Rather than refer to the issue as same-sex or gay marriage, because it points out the difference between traditional marriage and what they are trying to achieve, the organization frames the issue as the “freedom to marry.” In doing so, the debate is changed from a religious agreement between couples to an inalienable right guaranteed by the United States Constitution. American was birthed with the universal desire for freedom. She has fought wars and thousands have died to preserve it. Prejudices have been exposed, marches organized, laws enacted, and martyrs created for the cause of freedom in our country. By associating gay marriage with this emotive word that has so much historical weight, the proponents of same-sex marriage are seeking to both broaden its acceptance and vilify any who would oppose it. In a *New Republic* article published in 2000, gay marriage proponent Andrew Sullivan declared that marriage benefits are due homosexuals as they benefit society in general. Further, he insisted, the ability of two people of the same sex to marry is a basic civil right, the denial of which would be tantamount to discrimination. Sister organization The National LGBTQ Task Force, headed by Rea Carey, supports a similar agenda, providing online training for its followers in the fight to “change the course of history” by securing “freedom, justice, and equality” for all homosexuals. When presented with


6 “Get Trained,” *The National LGBTQ Taskforce*, Internet, available at
the view that the right to marry is an individual freedom that is available to all Americans with the same stipulations, same-sex marriage supporters disagree, and offer an alternative perspective. They view the right to marriage as collective, involving both parties that choose to enter into the commitment. This augmentation of the “rights umbrella” is a source of contention, as it serves as the basis for extending financial and civil benefits to legally joined partners under the law.\(^7\)

A second argument used by proponents of gay marriage, such as Freedom to Marry, is that same-sex couples love one another just like heterosexuals, and should therefore be allowed to marry and make a lifetime commitment to one another.\(^8\) Even members of the clergy are embracing this position, stating that many gay and lesbians were raised in a home of faith where God was represented as loving everyone. Therefore, it only stands to reason that God both loves and blesses the union between gay couples.\(^9\) Some further argue that this loving God has provided His thoughts on same-sex marriage in Genesis, as He clearly believes that it is not good that man remain alone.\(^10\) This position basically states that love, as the highest


\(^7\) Reginald Williams, “Same-Sex Marriage and Equality,” Ethical Theory and Moral Practice 14, no. 5 (October 2011): 590.

\(^8\) “About Freedom to Marry.”


emotion known to man, may override all moral law to achieve what is perceived to be the common good. Inclusivist at its core, this tactic has been effective, even making its way into court rulings against the banning of same-sex marriages. This year U.S. District Court Judge Arenda L. Wright Allen noted the capacity of same-sex couples to love and form emotional bonds as the basis for her opinion to strike down Virginia’s ban on gay marriage.11 By redefining the issue further with love as its champion, gay marriage opponents seek to surround their agenda with unassailable defenders.

A third argument posed by supporters of gay marriage is that they are harmed by not being allowed to legally marry. According to this tenet, same-sex couples are financially harmed because they are refused the benefits afforded to heterosexual married couples.12 As of 2014, there were almost 1,400 federal and state legal rights granted to couples upon marriage. These privileges and legal rights range from property transfer in the event of the death of a spouse to granting of a power of attorney for medical decision making in the case of serious injury.13 These legal benefits are a cornerstone in the rational, as opposed to emotional, portion of the same-sex marriage argument. For, in the courtroom of public debate, when love is established as the overriding qualification for marriage, logic dictates that the same


13 Monsma, 27.
benefits apply to all those who may enter into a committed relationship based on lifelong affection for one another. Gay marriage supporters also posit that they are harmed in the raising of their children by being denied the right to marry. Since marriage is a binding commitment recognized by the government, it is therefore argued that it provides a more stable environment in which children may live.\textsuperscript{14} Although civil unions and domestic partnerships are offered as alternatives to marriage, same-sex marriage supporters reject these options as they are viewed as less secure. Gay marriage advocates point out this disparity as a harmful disadvantage to homosexual couples in loving relationships.\textsuperscript{15} At the heart of this argument is the sense that homosexual relationships have value equal to that of heterosexual ones, and that by denying them legal marital status amounts to a disenfranchisement of a gay couple’s freedom of choice.\textsuperscript{16} Further, proponents of same-sex marriage argue that the reasoning that the purpose of marriage is for procreation harms them. They point out that not all heterosexual couples have children, while many homosexual couples adopt and provide nurturing homes for them.\textsuperscript{17} In addition to this, gay marriage supporters decry the notion that children


\textsuperscript{17} Vaughn Bryan Baltzly, “Same-Sex Marriage, Polygamy, and
need both a mother and a father present within the family unit. This definition of marriage, they say, is harmful to their cause as it limits their access to their fundamental right to be recognized legally as a committed couple in the bonds of marriage. Having both a father and a mother present in a home, it is argued, does not guarantee a nurturing environment for children. Further, it is argued that gay couples can provide the same love and attention to children as a heterosexual couple, rendering the “father and mother” rationale impotent.\textsuperscript{18}

A fourth position taken by gay marriage advocates is not creedal in nature, but in the tactical manner in which the prior three tenets are presented to the public for acceptation. Same-sex proponents regularly seek to discredit the Bible as a moral guideline for the definition of marriage. Further, many gay rights organizations attempt to use theological arguments to support their position on marriage, citing perceived contradictions in Scripture involving polygamy in the Old Testament.\textsuperscript{19} They also present alternate interpretations of New Testament passages traditionally translated as condemning of the homosexual lifestyle in order to support their position. But the catalyst that has generated the most movement in societal acceptance of their position has been the targeted approach with which the same-sex advocates have presented their message. Realizing that the primary geographic

\textsuperscript{18} Timothy F. Murphy, “Same-Sex Marriage: Not a Threat to Marriage or Children,” \textit{Journal of Social Philosophy} 42, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 294.

resistance to gay marriage is located in the southern United States, gay marriage advocates have designed and implemented a strategy specifically targeting the American South. Citing the lack of progress in this critical region, GLAAD has implemented its “Southern Stories” initiative in an effort to gain support and generate culture shift in the South. Further, while their central position involves rights, freedom and anti-discrimination, gay marriage advocacy groups instruct their supporters to avoid using words such as “redefine” or “deserving” when talking about marriage. They also suggest that their followers not focus on “rights” or “benefits,” indicating “most people don’t think about marriage this way.” These tactics serve to artfully cover their true purpose and are disingenuous at best.

Response

Same-sex marriage is a distortion of God’s preordained design for marriage. In Genesis 2:24, for the purpose of marriage, God indicates that a man (in the Hebrew, the opposite of a woman) shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife (in the Hebrew, the opposite of a man). This definition is clearly heterosexual in nature. However, this is not the only reference in the Bible to God’s position on homosexuality and same-sex relations. Leviticus 18:22 specifies that men having sex with men, and therefore women with women, is a detestable sin. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, lists homosexuality as a sin, along with promiscuity, prostitution, idol worship, theft, greed, abusiveness, drunkenness, and


\[\text{21 “Talking About Marriage.”}\]
deceit (6:9). When ruling against section 3 of DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act), Federal District Court Judge Joseph Tauro indicated his belief that gay and heterosexual couples engaged in relationships that were virtually indistinguishable.\(^{22}\) However, same-sex marriage violates the complementary nature of marriage. God designed marriage with specific gender roles in place in order to make it fulfilling. Marital roles are inseparably tied to gender; therefore, same-sex individuals cannot join together to fulfill God’s design for marriage. God commands husbands to love their wives, and for wives to respect their husbands in Ephesians 5:33. In addition to this, the qualifications for both elder and deacon within the church specify that a man be the husband of one wife. These roles are not merely an Old Testament invention of man, but are an intentional design from the mind of God.

In Genesis 1:28, God commands the man and woman to have children and populate the earth. Since same-sex couples are physically incapable of reproducing at any time during their relationship by natural design, this aspect of marital purpose cannot be met. Gay marriage proponents disagree, offering artificial insemination as mitigation for this shortfall. However, this does not account for the fact that the children produced are not the biological offspring of the same-sex couple, thereby insufficiently meeting the criteria for procreation. Further, gay marriage proponents offer the sterility argument in opposition to this position. The sterility argument states that heterosexual couples exist wherein at least one partner is physically

incapable of producing offspring, thereby disqualifying them from marriage. However, this counter position focuses on the act of procreation, rather than the design to carry out the command given. It is not the physical ability alone that determines the qualification for marriage; rather, it is design inherent in physical properties of the participants that portends a Creator’s purpose for marriage. Otherwise, a person born as a woman could be surgically altered, then seek to marry another woman and garner the support of traditional marriage advocates. This scenario too would fail the procreation requirement, as the participants were not originally designed to fulfill it.

The opponents in the debate regarding same-sex marriage have, at their core, a fundamental difference in opinion related to homosexuality. Proponents of gay marriage believe that homosexuality is a birth trait and is therefore not morally wrong. For purposes of debate, teaching, or evangelism, a distinction should be drawn between homosexuality and homosexual acts. Homosexuality is a birth trait, but not in the sense that it is portrayed by gay marriage advocates. As listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9, homosexuality is a propensity of the sin nature just as an affinity for alcohol, theft, lying, and other sexual promiscuity are found to be. Homosexual acts are strongly condemned in scripture as well, as has been previously documented in this work. The proposition that one is powerless to resist this innate propensity towards homosexuality is false when considered in the light of God’s truth found in

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1 Corinthians 10:13. For all temptations of virtue known to man, God will provide a way of escape so that each may not fall into condemnation. In addition to this, gay marriage advocates’ use of Scripture to imply that God endorses same-sex relationships due to His overwhelming love for mankind are misplaced. Love does not override moral law; it fulfills it. God, and therefore Jesus, is love. Jesus did not come to do away with the law, but to fulfill it (Romans 13:10). Gay marriage advocacy groups employ the situationist mentality in their approach by implying that love, as the greatest of all human emotion, may override any moral law. In this line of thinking, the truth is determined by the situation; therefore, it is only logical that because gay partners love one another, their situation demands recognition by marriage. However, truth is unchangeable, and the same in any scenario. The situation does not determine the truth; God does. The situation merely determines how one applies God’s truth in their lives. Hence, God does not approve of homosexuality, as any other sin. Nor does God bless same-sex marriages, as that is not His design for the union He created. He does, however love all mankind so much that He provided a redemptive provision for people to have their relationship restored with Him. This is love, that a Heavenly Father first loved us.

Conclusion

The debate surrounding same-sex marriage will only intensify in the coming months, as more states seek to legalize it, and others attempt to overturn laws already in place that allow the practice. Gay marriage advocates are focused, organized and active, providing training, financial support, and borderline intimidation in some areas in order to see their agenda flourish. GLAAD monitors and lobbies each of the major television
networks for additional gay friendly programming, providing a yearly scorecard listing the number of shows containing gay characters. They also create and introduce scripts that promote the acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle to each network and lobby each for inclusion in various plots. Clearly, the opposition to traditional marriage has launched a coordinated effort to win support for a cause that is spiritually and morally incorrect. In order to stem the tide of legal provision and societal acceptation for this belief, traditional marriage supporters must become well informed regarding appropriate responses to the accusations of discrimination and perceived bigotry projected on them by their opponents. They must also seek to better articulate their own position without vitriol, emphasizing the redefinition of marriage that is taking place, despite their opponents’ lack of transparency in admitting to that effect. Proponents of traditional marriage must have the courage to speak in favor of their position at the risk of being labeled a bigot without responding to negative commentary in kind. Rather, they must focus on positively framing the issue as defending their rights and freedom to preserve marriage as it was designed by the Creator, and provided for as an individual right of freedom by the Constitution. Unless traditional marriage supporters regain their voice in the forum of public debate, the clock is ticking on the nationwide redefinition of marriage. It is only a matter of time.

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