

"Moral Issues Confronting Christians"



The Institution of Marriage

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**Rev. Dr. Perry Simmons, Jr. – Pastor
Abyssinian Baptist Church
224 West Kinney Street
Newark, New Jersey 07103**

"MORAL ISSUES CONFRONTING CHRISTIANS"

THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

MATTHEW 19:4

INTRODUCTION

ONE MORAL ISSUE THAT CONFRONTS CHRISTIANS TODAY RELATES TO THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE.

MANY PEOPLE ARE CLAMORING TO REDEFINE MARRIAGE.

GOVERNMENTS ARE RESPONDING WITH LAWS THAT REDEFINE WHO MAY MARRY.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IS NOW LEGAL IN SEVEN STATES IN THE UNITED STATES. AND POLYGAMY AND OTHER FORMS OF MARRIAGE WILL LIKELY FOLLOW.

AS CHRISTIANS ARE CONFRONTED WITH THIS ISSUE, WE DO WELL TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- 1. WHAT DID JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES REVEAL ABOUT MARRIAGE?**
- 2. WHAT DO THEY SAY ABOUT SAME-SEX MARRIAGE?**
- 3. HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO THOSE IN SAME-SEX MARRIAGES?**

I. WE BEGIN THEREFORE BY LOOKING AT WHAT JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES REVEAL ABOUT MARRIAGE.

A. LET US LOOK FIRST AT JESUS' TEACHING ON MARRIAGE.

- 1. MARRIAGE WAS INSTITUTED BY GOD AT THE BEGINNING.**

- a. MATTHEW 19:3-4, “THE PHARISEES ALSO CAME UNTO HIM, TEMPTING HIM, AND SAYING UNTO HIM, IS IT LAWFUL FOR A MAN TO PUT AWAY HIS WIFE FOR EVERY CAUSE AND HE ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO THEM, HAVE YOU NOT READ, THAT HE WHICH MADE THEM AT THE BEGINNING MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, AND SAID, FOR THIS CAUSE SHALL A MAN LEAVE FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE: AND THEY TWAIN SHALL BE ONE FLESH.”**
 - b. WEDDINGS MAY BE A SOCIAL CUSTOM, AND VARIOUSLY DEFINED BY CULTURES, BUT MARRIAGE ITSELF IS ORDAINED BY GOD, NOT BY SOCIETY OR THE STATE.**
- 2. MARRIAGE WAS DESIGNED FOR THOSE CREATED MALE AND FEMALE. (MATTHEW 19:4).**
 - a. FROM THE BEGINNING, THIS WAS GOD’S DESIGN.**
 - b. GOD BEGAN MARRIAGE WITH ADAM AND EVE, NOT ADAM AND STEVE.**
- 3. MARRIAGE IS FOR MALE AND FEMALE, WHO BECOME ONE FLESH. (MATTHEW 19:5)**
 - a. A MAN IS TO LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER TO START A NEW FAMILY.**
 - b. MAN AND WOMAN ARE BIOLOGICALLY DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER.**
- 4. MARRIAGE IS A UNION THAT GOD JOINS, NOT THE STATE.**

- a. MATTHEW 19:6, “WHEREFORE THEY ARE NO MORE TWAIN, BUT ONE FLESH. WHAT THEREFORE GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER, LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER.”
- b. GOD IS THE ONE THAT DOES THE JOINING, AND THE STATE CAN NOT FORCE GOD TO DO SOMETHING BY PASSING LAWS.

5. STATES MAY THEREFORE DECLARE MARRIAGES THAT ARE UNLAWFUL IN GOD’S SIGHT.

- a. MATTHEW 6:17-18, “FOR HEROD HIMSELF HAD SENT FORTH AND LAID HOLD UPON JOHN, AND BOUND HIM IN PRISON FOR HERODIAS’ SAKE, HIS BROTHER PHILIP’S WIFE: FOR HE HAD MARRIED HER. FOR JOHN HAD SAID UNTO HEROD, IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR THEE TO HAVE THY BROTHER’S WIFE.”
- b. HEROD’S MARRIAGE TO HERODIAS WAS APPROVED BY THE STATE, BUT IN GOD’S SIGHT, IT WAS NOT LAWFUL FOR HIM TO HAVE HER.

6. JESUS DEFINED MARRIAGE AS INSTITUTED AND REGULATED BY GOD, NOT BY THE STATE.

B. LET US NOW LOOK AT THE APOSTLES' TEACHING ON MARRIAGE.

1. ACCORDING TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE APOSTLES, SEX IN MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE, BUT SEX OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE IS NOT.

- a. HEBREWS 13:4, “MARRIAGE IS HONOURABLE IN ALL, AND THE BED UNDEFILED: BUT WHOREMONGERS AND ADULTERERS GOD WILL JUDGE.”

2. THE SOLUTION TO SEXUAL IMMORALITY IS CLEARLY STATED.

a. EITHER HETEROSEXUAL MARRIAGE – (1COR 7:1-5) OR SELF-CONTROL – (1COR 7:6-9).

3. MARRIAGE IS A DIVINE INSTITUTION, NOT A CIVIL ONE.

a. GOD DETERMINES WHAT CONSTITUTES A PROPER MARRIAGE, NOT MAN.

b. MARRIAGE THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE IS ALWAYS BETWEEN A MAN AND WOMAN.

B. WE NOW NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

1. THERE IS NOT ONE SCRIPTURE SUPPORTING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE EVEN THOUGH THE PRACTICE WAS KNOWN AMONG THE GENTILES.

a. EMPEROR NERO HIMSELF HAD, THREE SAME-SEX MARRIAGES (DORYPHYRUS PYTHAGORAS AND SPORUS).

b. THERE IS NO BIBLICAL TEACHING ON HOW SAME-SEX MARRIAGES ARE TO WORK.

c. WHO IS TO BE THE HEAD? WHO IS TO SUBMIT?

d. ALL DISCUSSIONS PERTAINING TO MARRIAGE DESCRIBE HUSBAND-WIFE (MALE-FEMALE) RELATIONSHIPS – (1COR. 7:10-40; ROM. 7:1-4; EP 5:22-33; COL. 3:18-19; 1TIM. 3:2,11-12; 5:14; TIT. 1:6; 2:4-5; 1PET. 3:1-7).

2. AT BEST, THE BIBLE IS SILENT REGARDING SAME-SEX MARRIAGE; OF COURSE, THERE IS

THE ISSUE OF HOMOSEXUALITY ITSELF (TO BE DISCUSSED LATER).

C. HOW CHRISTIANS SHOULD RESPOND...

- 1. SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IS ON PAR WITH OTHER UNSCRIPTURAL MARRIAGES.**
 - a. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE CAN LEAD TO ADULTEROUS MARRIAGES.**
 - b. GOVERNMENTS HAVE SANCTIONED ADULTEROUS MARRIAGES FOR YEARS.**
 - c. MANY CHRISTIANS HAVE FRIENDS AND FAMILY INVOLVED IN SUCH MARRIAGES.**
 - d. AS SAME-SEX MARRIAGES BECOME COMMON, SO WILL OUR ACQUAINTANCE WITH SUCH.**
 - e. WE MUST STAND FIRM IN SUPPORT OF TRUTH CONCERNING THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE.**
- 2. AS WITH ALL PEOPLE ENGAGED IN SINFUL BEHAVIOR, WE SHOULD:**
 - a. LOVE THE SINNER WHILE HATING THE SIN.**
 - b. SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE, NOT HATE – (EPH 4:15).**
 - c. REACH OUT WITH GENTLENESS, PATIENCE, HUMILITY – (2TIM 2:24-26).**
 - d. CONVERT THEM TO JESUS AS SAVIOR AND LORD (WILLING TO OBEY IN ALL THINGS) – (MAT 28:18-20).**
 - e. WE SHOULD CERTAINLY NOT FAULT THE CHILDREN – (EZE 18:20).**

3. AS "CITIZEN SAINTS" LIVING IN A FREE SOCIETY, WE SHOULD:
 - a. PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS, THAT WE MAY LIVE PEACEABLE, GODLY LIVES – (1TIM 2:1-4).
 - b. LIVE AS SOJOURNERS AND PILGRIMS, SETTING HONORABLE EXAMPLES – (1PET 2:11-12; ROM 12:1-2).
4. VOTE FOR THOSE WHO RESPECT GOD'S WORD ON SUCH ISSUES, FOR IT CAN ONLY ENSURE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY; PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE OF ONE'S COUNTRY (PROVERBS 14:34).
5. OUR RESPONSE SHOULD BE NO DIFFERENT THAN WITH ANY OTHER SIN.

CONCLUSION

- A. THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE HAS LONG BEEN UNDER ATTACK.
 1. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE FOR ANY REASON HAS UNDERMINED MARRIAGE FOR GENERATION.
 2. SAME SEX MARRIAGE IS ONLY THE LATEST ATTACK; IT PROBABLY WON'T BE THE LAST.
 3. MANY CHOOSE TO SIMPLY COHABITATE RATHER THAN MARRY AT ALL.
- B. AS CHRISTIANS CONFRONTED WITH SUCH ATTACKS, LET US:
 1. REMAIN TRUE TO THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.
 2. ILLUSTRATE BY WAY OF EXAMPLE THAT GOD'S WAY IS GOOD, ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT.

- 3. REACH OUT TO ALL WHO ARE LOST IN SIN WITH THE TRUTH AND LOVE THAT IS IN JESUS CHRIST.**
- 4. ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT WHEN IT COMES TO THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE, MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE AMONG ALL, AND THE BED IS UNDEFILED; BUT FORNICATORS AND ADULTERERS GOD WILL JUDGE.**