

Same Sex Marriage Controversy

Definition of Marriage

Webster's New Abridged Dictionary—1951

- 1. The state of being married; relation between husband and wife.**
 - 2. The act of marrying.**
- Marry—to join as husband and wife; to take a husband or wife.**

Webster's New Abridged Dictionary—1991

- 1. The legal union of a man and woman as husband and wife;**
 - 2. The state of being married.**
- Marry—to take as husband or wife**

Merriam-Webster (2012)—

- (1) : the state of being united to a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law (2): the state of being united to a person of the same sex in a relationship like that of a traditional marriage <same-sex *marriage*>**

God's definition of marriage (The Bible)

Genesis 2:18, 21-24—“The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him'...and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (NIV).

Eph. 5:23-32—“For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of his body, the church; he gave his life to be her Savior. As the church submits to Christ, so you wives must submit to your husbands in everything. And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault. In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife. No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body, which is the church. And we are his body.

As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.

There are more than 500 Old and New Testament references to the words "marriage," "married," "husband," and "wife."

1 Peter 3:1-5, 7, "In the same way, you wives must accept the authority of your husbands, even those who refuse to accept the Good News. Your godly lives will speak to them better than any words. They will be won over by watching your pure, godly behavior. Don't be concerned about the outward beauty ... You should be known for the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God ... In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat her with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. If you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not be heard. [\(NLT\)](#)

1 Corinthians 7:1-2, "... It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. [\(NIV\)](#)

Marriage—Why God's Definition Matters

The US Senate recently began a debate on the Federal Marriage Amendment. If it passes and it goes to all the states and becomes a part of our Constitution then we will say marriage in this country is defined between a man and woman. If that doesn't happen there are activist judges who are going to see that the definition in this country changes. People say, "So what; what is the big deal?"

Believe me....It is a "Big Deal!"

I want to cover three things:

- **First of all, there is Biblical definition of marriage;**
- **Second, why holding to that traditional definition of marriage matters**
- **Third, what is our call as believers in Christ in this context?**

I would like you to hear from the wisest man who ever walked this planet; a man who influenced all of western civilization; a man whose teachings are foundational to the documents that this country is founded upon. That Man is Jesus Christ and He gave us God's definition of marriage. It is recorded in Matthew 19 and Mark 10 in the New Testament. In the context the religious leaders were debating with Jesus about divorce. In His answer Jesus reached back to the book of Genesis pulled out Chapter 2 and He said this, "Have you not heard that in the beginning He created them male and female and for this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and the two shall become one flesh?" If you want to know what God in the flesh has to say about the definition of marriage, make no mistake about it, He defined it clearly and He built it on Genesis 2. Let us look at the text. Jesus quoted part of it.

21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

22 The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Genesis 2:21-25

This is God's definition of marriage: One man, one woman, coming together for a lifetime with a commitment built on five things.

- **First, receive your mate as a gift from God. That is how Adam responded to Eve.**
- **Then leave your father and mother and**
- **Cleave unto your mate and**
- **Then become one and**
- **Practice transparency. They were naked and not ashamed.**

During the five thousand years of recorded human history, every society has built upon that definition. Those societies that built upon it prospered. Those that rejected it and built on something else, history shows they have crumbled. That is the way it has always been.

· **The US Supreme Court 1888 in Maynard vs. Hill described marriage as creating the most important relationship in life, as having more to do with the morals and civilization of a people than any other institution.**

· **In 1971, Baker vs. Nelson, the Minnesota Supreme Court affirmed the Judeo Christian roots of the definition of marriage when they said "The institution of marriage as the union of a man and a woman uniquely involving the procreation and rearing of children within a family is as old as the book of Genesis."**

When you take that definition and then begin to read through the Old Testament you will see the definition holds firm. Some people raise the question about polygamy. Abraham, David and heroes of the faith were polygamists! I want you to realize they violated the Biblical definition and in every single case the ugly consequences of polygamy were always pointed out in Scripture. The New Testament reaffirmed over and over again this definition. Jesus honored that traditional definition of marriage by performing His first miracle at a wedding in Cana.

The Apostle Paul went so far as to say a Godly man and woman in marriage is God's object lesson to the world of His relationship with His Bride, the Church. (Ephesians 5).

The author of Hebrews says that marriage is to be held in honor among all men. (Hebrews 13:4), "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."

NOTE: the government has a vested interest in protecting the traditional definition of marriage. The role of government is to do what is best for society and to hold to traditional standards for the benefit of all people involved. When it forsakes that role, societies crumble. *For example, the Defense of Marriage Act, 1996; Congress debated it; 85 Senators supported it; President Clinton signed it into law saying that in the United States of America marriage is defined as one man, one woman. I want to submit to you that when they signed that into law they were not narrow minded bigots, they were not hate mongers; they were doing their duty of standing for what is right for the benefit of the country. They knew that history demonstrates the best thing for any country is promoting one man and one woman coming together to form a marital bond, that is the proper place for sexuality and the raising of children.

**Note: In touring the Clinton Presidential Library in 2014, my wife and I noticed while observing the many documents signed by Clinton while he was President (They have a display of a day by day work schedule and petitions/laws signed by Clinton) that they had removed the Defense of Marriage Act signed by Clinton as one of his accomplishments. We went to the information and comment booth and told one of the Library dignitaries that we noticed that this act signed by President Clinton had been removed from the timeline of Clinton's accomplishments. They were shocked that we had noticed this...but they did say that they would check it out. We haven't been back to the Library. I am wondering...is this important law now placed back into the timeline of his actions while he was in office. Maybe the answer would be, "Well, it depends on what "is" is!*

WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH'S STAND BE ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE?

Answer: The same as God's stance. The same as His Word.

Take a stand...Don't stand idle. Stand for the truth of God's Word.

How should we respond? What are some things we can do to let our voice be heard?

Bigot: Webster's Definition—A person who is rigidly devoted to his own group, religion, race, or politics and is intolerant of those who differ.

Intolerant: Webster's Definition—1. Unwilling to tolerate differences in opinions or beliefs;

3. Unable or unwilling to endure

Will you...and I endure the criticism?

Why are we called intolerant and the other side is not called the same?

Stand firm, Christian, Stand firm!