

The case against Equal Marriage

In 100 words

This view says, the Bible teaches sex must only ever be between a man and a woman, and then, only within marriage. Anything else is sin; be that, co-habiting, divorce, or same-sex relationships. Therefore, marriage must only be between a man and woman. As well as specific references in the Old and New Testaments condemning homosexuality, Genesis 1-2 reveals God's heterosexual design for humanity built into Creation. Adam and Eve, as husband and wife, are the God-created pattern for all generations; the means to populate and bring order to the Earth. Jesus cited this opposite-sex Creation narrative to endorse marriage.

In 750 words

In the beginning... When God declared, "It is not good for the man to be alone", the helper God created and gifted to Adam was a woman. God created Adam and Eve, man and woman, male and female – different yet complementary – to be in exclusive relationship with one another and God. God blessed this prototype couple and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply – to procreate. As with the animal world, God's design was based on opposite-sex (heterosexual) reproduction. This set a pattern for all people to follow.

By obediently procreating (having children), Adam and Eve, and then, then likes of Noah and his unnamed wife, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Rachel, all helped to establish a people, Israel, God's holy nation. Though each of these couples were far from perfect, through these heterosexual relationships, God established His one-sided covenant, promising "I will be your God, and you will be my people." This was ultimately fulfilled through Christ, the *new* Covenant. Christian marriage is not just a legal or State contract, it is a spiritual covenant between one man, one woman, and God; a 'three-cord strand' that binds the couple and God together.

Through the Law of Moses, God outlined the moral, civil, and ceremonial standards His people were to abide by; and the consequences, should they not. The Ten Commandments reflect, and call us to follow, the heterosexual pattern within Creation: "Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you". To protect the call for married couples to populate the Earth, the Law prohibited anything and everything outside of heterosexual marriage relationships. "Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable, an abomination." And, "If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads."

Whilst it's true Jesus didn't repeat the Old Testament Law prohibiting same-sex relations, in answering a question about *divorce*, Jesus affirmed the sanctity of marriage by citing the Genesis Creation accounts. 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". In this view, Jesus affirmed that marriage is between a man and a woman and for procreation. Therefore, same-sex relations, along with co-habiting, divorce, and contraception are in defiance to the pattern God set in Genesis.

That pattern established by God in Creation with Adam and Eve symbolises the committed, faithful relationship Jesus, as The Bridegroom, seeks with His Bride or wife, the Church. It all follows God's heterosexual design, the natural order of things. Consequently, Apostle Paul says, by going outside of God's design, those, among others, who have same-sex relations are wrongdoers.

Revelation points to the completion of all things, when Christ will return for His Bride. We are to rejoice and be glad and give him glory. For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. And, I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. It repeats the pattern God established in Creation.

To conclude, this view says, from Genesis to Revelation, Creation to Completion, the Bible presents God's design and purpose as being fulfilled through a heterosexual order. Christian marriage, as the union of one man with one woman, is to be honoured and protected.

God has offered us two ways to be human adults. We can be single, or we can be married faithfully to a person of the opposite sex. Anything else is sin. Just because the State now recognises the joining of same-sex couples, first, through Civil Partnership and now 'marriage', God does not and, therefore, neither should the Church. Christian marriage must remain fundamentally heterosexual.

None of this means we aren't called to love those living outside of God's design. Through our love and gentle witness, we long to see *all* people reconciled with Christ. We therefore welcome all people, whatever their lifestyle, in the hope that all will yield to Christ – repent – and experience the power of His transforming resurrection.