

Same Sex Marriage and the Church

True compassion, true sensitivity, true love, true happiness

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“If they are not doing any harm to someone else, why would the Church be against two people of the same gender being married?”

Establishing some things up front first

Before looking at this question itself let's establish some things right up front. The Church, and Almighty God, wants everyone to be happy in this life and forever in the next life. The Church is all about *true* compassion, *true* sensitivity, *true* love and true happiness. The Church will never embrace counterfeit forms of these virtues even under pain of persecution and death. This is because the Church loves people too deeply to ever betray them with anything less than true compassion, true sensitivity, true love and true happiness. In doing so the Church is manifesting God's sensitivity, compassion and love which Jesus Christ modeled for us on the Cross. True sensitivity, true compassion, true love and true happiness are a function of two things: *fidelity to truth itself* and *accepting the reality of the Cross*. If the truth is diluted or obscured in any way, then there is be no true compassion, sensitivity, love and happiness. There is only agenda and self-interest.

True sensitivity, true compassion, true love and true happiness will ultimately in some way involve embracing the Cross and Resurrection. This will always involve continual choices in varying degrees to die to self and rise to our true and best selves. It will always involve putting others and the good of the community above our own feelings, desires and self-centeredness no matter how strongly we feel these desires

When Jesus Christ hung on the Cross the people going by said that they would believe in him if only Jesus would get rid of the Cross. Yet, the Cross was the one thing that Jesus Christ would NOT take out of the equation because He knew that the Cross was our only ticket to true and ever lasting happiness and He loved us too much to take it out of the equation. The Church is the same way. People criticize and hate the Church not so much because of its “teachings” on these moral hot button issues like same sex attraction, but because the Catholic Church (included here also are the Orthodox Churches) is the only entity on earth that will not dilute the Cross or take the Cross out of the equation for the same reason that Jesus Christ would not—true sensitivity, true compassion, true love, true happiness. Jesus was persecuted for this and so will the Church be also. The Church is the conscience of the world and let's face it, who really likes their conscience? Our conscience bugs us, so we try to ignore or silence it.

The prerequisite of undying fidelity to truth yet of dying to ourselves frightens us because we think that our own legitimate needs will go unmet. But it is precisely in dying to self that we find our true selves and have our legitimate needs met to the degree that it is possible on this side of eternity. Having established the truth about the Church, let's now look at the question itself.

The question itself

First, the question itself is flawed. It reflects three things that are characteristic of our culture and which underlie so many of our problems and difficulty in moral discernment: compartmentalization, disintegration and radical privacy. The question itself also reflects the moral relativism of our times.

There is no such thing as someone doing something in the “privacy of their own home” and not affecting others. There is no such thing as a “private sin.” The human race by nature is communal. We are integrated. It is like the links on a chain. Do harm to one link and the entire chain is affected. As a society we seem to have some understanding of this. For example, it is illegal to use heroin or cocaine even in the “privacy of our own home.” It is illegal to commit suicide or to take a prostitute into the “privacy of our own home.” In fact our culture seems to be heading toward making it illegal for someone to smoke in the “privacy of their own home.” Our society knows that abusing drugs is harmful to someone and doing harm to ourselves will affect others because we are communal beings. An individual who becomes an addict in the “privacy of their own home” becomes a burden on society because drug abuse leads to broken marriages, broken families, abuse, poverty and crime. This in turn stresses our social infrastructures which in turn can inspire raising taxes. We could go on and on and all of this is because someone was doing something in the “privacy of their own home” thinking they were “not hurting anyone else.”

Secondly the question itself is flawed and in fact the entire discussion on same sex marriage is flawed because “marriage” between people of the same gender is simply not possible. It does not and cannot exist. So, why are we, as a supposedly sophisticated society, considering legislation about something that cannot exist!? We look like absolute fools!

Words mean things and they point to concrete realities. We cannot attach just any word to any reality we want. This is part of that moral relativism we mentioned earlier: In moral relativism life and morality have no absolutes. Life and morality are just anything that we want them to be, anything that we label them to be. What matters is what we feel about them and not what the reality is in itself. When we do this we set up a dishonesty, an illusion and delusion which in turn hurts the individuals involved and, as we said earlier, the whole community. Chasing an illusion can only lead to a simmering frustration beneath a façade of happiness.

The fact of the matter is among the population that practices a so called “gay lifestyle” there are higher percentages of things like depression, abuse, suicide, HIV, AIDS and colon cancer than among the rest of the population.

Although some like to deny these realities they are nonetheless true. Since, as we said at the beginning, the Church and God want us to be happy, the Church will not support an illusion, a delusion or an untruth that the Church knows will not ultimately bring about true happiness but instead will lead to this simmering frustration and unfulfillment.

The word “marriage” itself has within its own construct the concepts of motherhood and gender (Matrimony=”matri=mother.) Furthermore, the word “marriage” has a French root which implies manhood or fatherhood.) If there are not two complimentary genders, then it cannot be “marriage.” Just because we call something by a name does not make it so. Marriage is not just “two people who love each other coming together.” Marriage is being used today in the same sex agenda to legitimize attractions between people which are in fact not based in true sexuality even though that is how they are presented.

If it does not involve people of complementary genders, it cannot be “sexual” in the true sense. It become counterfeit, an illusion and therefore ultimately harmful. The mutual stimulation of sexual organs leading to mutual orgasm is simply just that. It cannot be “having sex” in the true sense of the word because it does not involve persons of complementary genders. Same sex activity involves bodies and the stimulation of body parts. But it is impossible for people of the same gender to come together sexually in the way that is unique to a female wife and a male husband. A husband and wife come together in an integrated way—as total persons through their bodies—faithfully, freely, fully and fruitfully. When this happens between a real husband and wife something happens between the two of them that is mutually beneficial to their entire persons, not just to certain body parts.

The same sex behavior is compartmentalized, disintegrated and therefore can never, ever, be “sex” or “marriage” in the true sense of the word. Yes, of course two people of the same gender are putting their bodies or some body parts together in what they erroneously call “sex.” But the truth of the matter is that they are not and cannot actually have “sex.” Once again, the actual meaning of words becomes critical: “Sex” requires bodies that are complimentary and our bodies are a package deal—they include our whole person along with them. So, if the bodies cannot truly come together in what we call “sex”, then the persons cannot either. And sex is not just about genital stimulation and orgasm. It is about two persons becoming a union and communion of persons and in this way reflecting the very interior life of the Holy Trinity and sharing in the way that Christ the Bridegroom loved and united Himself with His Bride.

As you can see, it is impossible to contain within sound bites the answer to why the Church does not approve of so-called same sex marriage. There is so much foundation, so much education and reconfiguring of our thinking and ethos that has to take place for people to understand where the Church is coming from on this issue and on all moral issues. However, the following bullet point type of answers can be helpful. *Note that what two people of the same gender do actually does profoundly harm other people, and in fact the whole of society.*

--Redefining marriage to mean something other than what is exclusively between a male husband and a female wife means that anything can be called "marriage:" incest, polygamy, bestiality, pedophilia, blow up dolls, or whatever!

--Civil unions lead to so called same-sex "marriage." In the state of Massachusetts, for example, where same-sex marriage was legalized, students are being exposed to instructions on the same sex agenda, pornography and illicit sexual acts. A judge even ruled that schools do not have to give parents the opportunity to pull their children from such exposure simply because same-sex "marriage" is now legal in Massachusetts.

--Same sex "marriages" deny a child a real male father and a real female mother.

--Same-sex civil unions and "marriages" are not civil rights issues. They are not the same as the struggle for racial equality.

--Same sex "marriage" do not create families which contributes to the good of society. Rather they create a naturally sterile union.

--Since same sex civil unions and marriages in Massachusetts were legalized the HIV and AIDS disease rates have gone up considerably.

--Children will witness same sex partners kiss and fondle in restaurants and public places to test and reinforce that establishment's "marriage equality."

--Wedding halls, caterers, photographers, etc. will have to do same-sex civil "marriages" or be arrested for discrimination.

--Catholic Charities has had to stop its foster care and adoption work for children because this Catholic organization would be forced to turn children over to co-habiting and same sex couples. This goes against Catholic conscience.

--Either the cost for social security, health and life insurance, etc. will skyrocket or the benefits will decrease dramatically in order to payout to everyone's definition of a "spouse" or partner even if it is fraudulent.

--If pastors and priests refer to same sex "marriage" as morally wrong according to the very order of creation made by God and written in the Bible, they will be charged with hate crimes.

All of this may still leave a person with the emotionally laden question of, ***“But if these two people of the same gender really, really, love each other and they can’t be married, where can they find their happiness? After all, men and women can get married to each other and be happy. Why can’t “gay” people also be allowed to be happy too?”***

The attraction that a person has for the same gender does not grow out of the same source as the attraction a man has for a woman that leads to marriage. The attraction between people of the same gender has more to do with unmet developmental needs and/or hurts. It is not love. Love is not about “needing” or even just about attraction. Love is about an act of a person’s will to choose to do or to not do whatever is best for the other person regardless of the cost to themselves. If it is not this than it is not really love, but rather, “need.”

However, two people of the same gender can love each other and they can even live together. They can enjoy what between them mutually works toward their becoming the best version of themselves, in other words, what leads to their holiness and salvation. But this love and benefit from each other cannot be nor should it be labeled or attempted to be lived out as the same love and complementary experience as that which can only take place between a male husband and female wife, i.e. “sexual” in the fullest sense of the word.

Beneath it all, every human is searching for intimacy because this is an experience of God and God made us in His image and likeness. This means we are made for intimacy. But we are made for a true intimacy which can only be achieved by living in concert with God’s order of creation. The Church is the only entity on earth that does not attach labels to people such as “gay” or “homosexual.” This is because labeling can never be sensitive, compassionate or loving and the Church is all about true sensitivity, true compassion, true love and true happiness. The Church prefers the word, “person” and teaches that the only adequate response to persons is love, respect and responsibility. This is because the word “person” finds its definition in God. There we go again with the all critical meaning of words and the concepts to which they point!

In the beautiful mind of the Church, there are only “persons.” And some “persons,” through no fault of their own, have developed what they believe to be a sexual attraction to the same gender. But the Church knows better about what is really going on here and how to help that person negotiate through the often frightening, arduous but liberating journey of truth and honesty. It is the Church and she alone who stands perpetually ready to accompany any person through that journey and the Church will do so every step of the way.