

Who Determines “Right” or “Wrong”?

Ultimately it comes down to this: How does a culture determine what is “right” and what is “wrong”? If the majority agrees on a set of standards, what happens when that majority is replaced by a *different* majority?

After all, the majority in power in many of our Western nations once believed abortion was wrong—but now the majority in power doesn’t believe this, so the laws have changed.

The majority in power in many of our Western societies once believed the institution of marriage should be one man for one woman. But that’s changed. Many are now allowing “gay marriage.” So how long before *polygamous* or *pedophiliac* relationships are allowed, which some people are starting to advocate? Who’s to say they’re wrong, if the majority agrees with them?

Some might say that there is no way a culture like America could allow pedophilia. Fifty years ago, however, most people probably would not have dreamed that America would ever allow gay marriage.

Where does one draw the line? And who determines who draws that line?

Does The Church Have The Answer?

The gay marriage issue has been headline news. Even the acceptance of gay clergy has been widely publicized.

As part of the public debate on the gay marriage issue, many church leaders have been interviewed on national TV programs. While the majority of church leaders have been speaking against gay unions and have been defending marriage as between one man and one woman, many of these same church leaders have not been able to adequately defend their position.

When asked whether Jesus dealt directly with the gay marriage issue, a prominent Christian leader in an interview on TV responded,

No, but then Jesus didn’t deal directly with the abortion issue or many other issues...

As I heard this response, I shook my head in dismay. A proper response could have been such a powerful witness, not only to the interviewer but to the potential millions of viewers watching the program. How could he have responded differently? Well, consider this answer:

Yes! Jesus *did* deal directly with the “gay marriage” issue. Listen to Him in Matthew 19:4-6,

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye 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? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

As literal history, Christ quoted directly from the book of Genesis and its account of the creation of Adam and Eve as the first man and woman—the first marriage. He explained the doctrine of marriage as being one man for one woman. Thus marriage cannot be a man and a man, or a woman and a woman. This is how Jesus Christ spoke of marriage. Consider who He is. In the New Testament in John 1:1-3 & 14 we read:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made... and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Word, is the Creator of all things; and therefore, He has the right and authority to determine “right” and “wrong.” The Bible is God’s written Word. Every word in the Bible is really the Word of the Creator—Jesus Christ. The homosexual issue and the gay marriage issue are dealt with in Leviticus 18:22 and Romans 1:26-28. When Scripture deals with these things, it is Christ Himself who is directly dealing with these issues.

In another interview on CNN, when this same Christian leader was asked the question, “Why are you against gay marriage?” he responded this way:

Because down through the ages, culture after culture has taught that marriage is between a man and a woman.

This kind of answer actually *opens the door* to gay marriage! Because it basically says that marriage is determined by man’s laws or opinions. Even in a secular context, the only answer a Christian should give is:

The Bible is the Word of our Creator, and Genesis is literal history. Its science and history can be trusted. Therefore, we have an absolute authority that determines marriage. God made the first man and woman—the first marriage. Thus, marriage can only be a man and a woman because we are accountable to the One who instituted marriage in the first place.

And we should remember, according to Scripture, one of the primary reasons for marriage is to produce godly offspring. Adam and Eve were told to “be fruitful and multiply,” but there’s no way a gay marriage can fulfill this command.

Why Don’t Many Christian Leaders Give The Right Kind of Answers?

Many Christian leaders don’t give the right answers as presented above because the majority of them have compromised with the idea of *millions of years* of history, as well as *evolutionary* beliefs in astronomy, geology and so on. As a result, the Bible’s authority has been undermined, and it’s no longer seen to be the absolute authority.

Back in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the idea of millions of years for the age of the earth began to be popularized. Sadly, many church leaders adopted this millions-of-years idea and began to reinterpret Genesis (the history upon which all Christian doctrine stands). They began to reinterpret the six days of creation as long periods, and Noah’s Flood to be a local event.

Over the years, most church leaders reinterpreted additional portions of Genesis based on evolutionary ideas. This compromise actually *unlocked a door* for future generations to reinterpret *other* parts of Scripture. In the end, this led to a loss of respect for the Bible’s authority—which is now no longer considered absolute by Western cultures as a whole. Thus, doctrines like marriage, which are based in Scripture, are no longer considered to be absolute.

Church leaders are certainly aware that the culture does not respect the Bible as it used to. But instead of understanding the foundational reason for this change (that is, that the Bible is no longer considered trustworthy because its history and science—particularly in Genesis, where the doctrine of marriage is founded—is no longer considered valid by scientists and even many in the church), these leaders attempt to defend Christian doctrines like marriage *without using the Bible* and its foundational history in Genesis.

In fact, the majority of these Christian leaders will never be able to logically defend marriage because *they themselves* don’t accept the literal history of Genesis as they should. As soon as they have allowed parts or all of Genesis chapters one through eleven to be reinterpreted on the basis of man’s fallible ideas, they have undermined their own absolute authority that’s foundational to all of their doctrines—including marriage as one man for one woman, as recorded in Genesis.

Because of years of such compromise over Genesis and biblical authority, many Christians cannot speak with authority as Christ did (*Matt 7:29*). They don’t really

understand how the literal history in Genesis 1-11 is foundational to every Christian doctrine (including marriage) and that it cannot in any way be compromised with man’s fallible ideas. Such compromise opens the door to adding man’s fallible ideas to other parts of the Bible.

What Can Surveys Tell Us?

Statistics (such as those from Barna Research) show us that as generations have adopted this attitude toward the Bible, the majority of Christians (and Christian leaders) either no longer look on the Bible as the absolute authority, or they misunderstand what it means for it to be the absolute authority. An “absolute authority” cannot be reinterpreted on the basis of any outside ideas. No wonder these Christians appeal to human opinion—“what the majority says”—in their answers about moral issues.

Thus, doctrines like marriage, which are based in Scripture, are no longer considered to be absolute by the culture as a whole. That’s why there’s an exploding gay marriage problem: by and large, people and the cultural leaders are no longer building their worldview on the Bible.

This also explains why there is now a problem with some in the church accepting homosexual behavior and gay marriage. Because most of the church has accepted the belief in millions of years and other evolutionary ideas, generations brought up in the church no longer see the Bible as absolute. Instead, they believe the Scriptures can be interpreted on the basis of man’s fallible ideas.

We have no doubt that, if those bishops who ordained a gay bishop in the Episcopal Church in the US (Nov 2003) and the leaders who supported a lesbian minister in the United Methodist Church (Jan 2003) were challenged concerning their beliefs in Genesis, you would find that they have already compromised with millions of years and other evolutionary ideas and thus would definitely not stand on a literal Genesis creation of six literal days, and the institution of marriage recorded in Genesis.

So, rather than *avoiding* the Bible in an attempt to appeal to the culture not to legalize gay marriage, church leaders who hold to the right doctrine of marriage (one man for one woman) need to be educating the church and the public to understand that the Bible’s history and science can be trusted in Genesis. If the history and science in the Bible are true, then the

morality based in that history is true — marriage equals one man for one woman.

Gay Marriage — Is Evolution The Cause?

We are not saying that belief in millions of years or other evolutionary ideas is the cause of social ills like gay marriage. This is not true at all. But it is accurate to say that the increasing acceptance of homosexual behavior and gay marriage has gone hand-in-hand with the popularity and acceptance of millions of years and evolutionary ideas.

But the more people (whether Christian or not) who believe in man’s ideas concerning the history of the universe, regardless of what God’s Word appears to be plainly teaching, then the more man’s fallible ideas will be used *as a basis* for determining “truth” and the Bible’s authority will be disregarded.

People need to understand that homosexual behavior and the gay marriage controversy are really not the problems in our culture, but are the *symptoms* of a much deeper problem. Even though it’s obvious from the Bible that homosexual behavior and gay marriage are an “abomination” (*Lev 18:22; Rom 1:26-28*), there is a foundational reason as to why there is an increasing acceptance of these awful ills in America and societies like it.

Cultures in the West were once pervaded by a primarily Christian worldview, because the majority of people at least respected the Bible as the authority on morality. However, the Bible’s authority has been increasingly undermined over the years, as much of the church compromised with the idea of millions of years (this began before Darwin) and thus began reinterpreting Genesis. When those outside the church saw church leaders rejecting Genesis as literal history, one can understand why they would quickly lose respect for *all* of the Bible. If the church doesn’t even believe this Book to be true, why should the world build its morality on a fallible work that modern science supposedly has shown to be inaccurate in its science and history!

The Bible has lost respect in people’s eyes (both within and without the church) to the extent that the culture as a whole now does not take the Bible’s morality seriously at all. The increasing acceptance of homosexual behavior and gay marriage is a symptom of the loss of the Bible’s authority, and is primarily due to the compromise the church has made with the secular world’s teaching on origins.

Were Homosexuals Created This Way?

Human sexuality is very complex, and the arguments will long rage as to the causes of homosexual behavior. In this fallen world, most behaviors are a complex mix of one’s personal choices superimposed on a platform of predisposition. This can be both from one’s genetic makeup and one’s environment (for example, one’s upbringing). Few students of human nature would doubt the proposition that some personalities are much more predisposed to alcoholism and/or wife-bashing, for instance. But would anyone argue that this would make wife-bashing acceptable?

The case for a “homosexual gene” has evaporated, but let’s say that researchers really were able to identify such a gene. After all, mutations (mistakes that have accumulated in the human gene pool over time) in a cursed, fallen world can cause all sorts of abnormalities and malfunctions. For one thing, that would be a result of the Curse, not creation. And would knowledge of such a gene make right what Scripture says is wrong? Absolute right and wrong exist independent of any secondary causative agencies.

In fact, a contributing factor to at least some cases of homosexuality is a dysfunctional upbringing right at the time when the child is gaining crucial environmental input regarding their own sexual identity. (Notice the importance the Bible places on bringing up children, the family unit, and so on.) This highlights one of the huge risks of “married” gay people bringing up adopted children, namely the vulnerability of the children to confused messages about their own sexual identity. To put it simply, if the environment contributes to homosexuality, gay marriage will tend to increase the likelihood of the next generation being gay.

Gay Marriage — What Is The Answer?

It says in Judges 17:6, “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” In other words, when there’s no absolute authority to decide right and wrong, everyone has their own opinion as to what they should do.

Regardless of what the world may say, the Bible is that absolute authority. It is the revealed Word of God as it claims. Its history and science in Genesis are true and can be defended using observational science. Since the history in Genesis is true, then the morality (such as the doctrine of marriage) that is built on that history is also true.

The answer that Christ gave to a question about divorce also concerned marriage:

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye 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? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder (*Matt 19:4-6*).

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe, quoted from the account of history in Genesis that details the creation of Adam and Eve. Jesus was effectively stating that the biology and anthropology of Genesis are true, that the history recorded in this book is accurate in every detail.

In doing this, He was explaining the foundation of marriage by reminding his listeners concerning the *origin* of marriage, the first and most fundamental of all human institutions ordained by God in Scripture.

The first family consisted of a man created from the dust of the ground, and a woman created from one of his ribs. Because these were literal creation events, the meaning of marriage is therefore determined by its origin. Thus, biblical marriage consists of one man and one woman, because God created a man and a woman, not a man and a man, or a woman and a woman.

Because Eve was created from Adam, they were said to be “one flesh,” which is also why a man and a woman become “one” in marriage. A so-called “gay” marriage has no basis for this “oneness” and is totally contrary to the biblical doctrine of marriage based in Genesis.

The battle against gay marriage will ultimately be lost (like the battle against abortion) unless the church and the culture return to the Bible’s absolute authority beginning in Genesis. Then and only then will there be a true foundation for the correct doctrine of marriage — one man for one woman for life.■

—Adapted from the writings of Ken Ham and Dr. Carl Wieland



Some people who defend marriage as a union between one man and one woman claim that it can be shown that cultures that have not adhered to this doctrine have reaped all sorts of problems. Thus, they claim, on this basis, that it’s obvious that marriage should be between one man and one woman only.

Even though such problems as the spread of disease might be shown to be a sound argument in this issue, ultimately it’s not a good basis for stating that one man for one woman must be the rule. It may be a sound argument based on maintaining a healthy physical body, but why should people have the right to dictate to other people what they can or cannot do in a sexual relationship? After all, another person might decide that the relationship between one man and one woman in marriage might cause psychological problems and use that as the basis for the argument. So which one is correct?

These Arguments Didn’t Work With Abortion

Say that a person used the argument, for example, that the children of gay parents had a higher incidence of depression (as research has shown), or that HIV kills people — therefore, marriage should be between a man and a woman. But note how such arguments have also been tried with abortion, and *rejected* by the culture.

Research has shown that women who have had an abortion have a high incidence of depression. The culture, however, has rejected the argument of “we shouldn’t hurt people,” claiming that it’s more important for women to have the “right to choose.” The argument that abortion kills people is an important one, because most people still accept the basic biblical prohibition against taking innocent human life. So we should ensure that people know that the baby is really human. But is it going to be enough in the long run, as even this prohibition cannot be absolute *without the Bible*?