

Same-Sex Marriage: Still a Tough Sell

For most Americans, the meaning of marriage is simply common sense. Marriage as the union of one man and one woman is at the heart of what most of us believe family should be. Even if we don't all manage to live out that belief as perfectly as we would like, not everyone who opposes the redefinition of marriage to include homosexual couples has a detailed explanation for their position. Just because someone is divorced, for example, does not mean he or she does not believe in **traditional marriage**. Everyday folks understand that society needs strong ideals to bring out the best in imperfect people.

When I ask regular people why they are not comfortable with calling homosexual relationships "marriage," I find it has nothing to do with fear or hatred. Although **same-sex marriage** advocates constantly slander the rest of us as irrational, hateful bigots, most people's objections are quite sensible.

When average people look at the facts, they are concerned with the "new reality" that legally sanctioned homosexual "marriage" will undermine the moral instruction of their children. They do not want schools teaching their children ideas about **homosexuality** that will disrespect their religious convictions. They are also concerned that if we "loosen" the definition of marriage once, we may do it again.

Almost no one is comfortable with legalized polygamy, for example, but if marriage no longer means one man and one woman, what's to say it won't mean three or four people? Would such a trend be modernity or cultural degradation?

Such objections are always dismissed as ignorant fear mongering by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

activists. They scold us for being stupid and reassure us that all they want is the right to love whomever they choose.

As homosexual marriage advocate Jonathan Rauch put it to NPR, "We are not asking, [as] gay marriage advocates, for the right to marry everybody or anybody, just to marry somebody." What could sound more innocent? And so concerns about polygamy or school-led indoctrination are mocked as if we are worried about the Boogie Man or a monster under the bed.

But what about the rest of the world? Other countries that have submitted themselves to the wishes of LGBT advocates—where has it led them? Let's start with Europe. Most **LGBT** activists praise many European countries for supposedly being "far ahead" of the United States regarding the legal privileges afforded LGBT individuals. Many Scandinavian countries support homosexual relationships, such as Denmark, for example, which was the first country to recognize civil partnerships for same-sex couples in 1989. Many other countries, like Great Britain, have implemented extensive diversity measures praised by LGBT activists worldwide.

So let's take a quick look at what's going on in the public schools in the United Kingdom. After 15 years of service in sex education and other similar nonprofits, Simon Blake has been named the chairman of the anti-bullying nonprofit Diversity Role Models. The organization conducts workshops in public schools.

How does Mr. Blake believe bullying can be ended? He believes that schools will breed bullying and fear unless "gay sexuality becomes visible in schools. We need openness in the playground, in the classroom and in the behaviour of teachers," the U.K's Pink News reports.

These words speak of a "bridge too far" for the average American family. The purpose of school is not for any group to express or flaunt their sexuality or to create a "new normal"

as is the name of a television show starting this fall. Are we to conclude that as part of a truly successful anti-bullying initiative, school children need to see two boys kissing at school or two teachers of the same gender in a romantic relationship?

Mr. Blake is giving voice to a viewpoint to which many sensible people are rightly concerned. LGBT activists want to indoctrinate children as early as possible with the idea that their sexual choices are healthy, normal and natural. This is, of course, what they believe. And now in the United Kingdom, school children will have to agree with them—or face accusations of being bullies.

Now let's take a look southward at Brazil. Despite polls indicating that the majority of Brazilians do not favor legalizing homosexual marriage, the Brazilian Supreme Court ruled to redefine "family" to include homosexual relationships. But that's not all. Earlier this year, three people—a man and two women—registered themselves as a "civil union" in Sao Paulo. Yes, you read that correctly. These people, in the eyes of the Brazilian courts, are in a legal, three-person union.

So maybe our concerns aren't unfounded after all. I believe all human beings bear God's image, and as such should be treated with respect and dignity. But treating LGBT individuals with respect and dignity does not require us to reorganize society according to their wishes or give them "superior rights" to the rest of us. It does not require us to submit our children for indoctrination about LGBT sexual practices, and it does not require that we make our legal system vulnerable to the slippery slope of eliminating the family altogether.

Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr. *is the senior pastor of Hope Christian Church, a 3,000-member congregation in the Washington, D.C., area. He is also founder and president of*

High Impact Leadership Coalition, which exists to protect the moral compass of America and be an agent of healing to our nation by educating and empowering churches, community and political leaders.