

The New Homosexuality?

☒ Things are different in Canada. No offense to Canadians, of course. Recently I was engaged in a lively debate about the topic of homosexuality and politics with a dear Canadian friend while I was there for a speaking engagement. Obviously, Canadian law has gone much further than U.S. law when it comes to the legitimization of homosexuality. Canada's speech codes and laws on marriage are far more liberal than ours. And, from an outsider's perspective, Canadians are not as engaged in the political battle surrounding these issues as we are in the United States. In fact, many of my Canadian friends, this one included, give me a very hard time about ministering to people struggling with same-sex attraction and being active and outspoken on political and social issues that encompass homosexuality.

During lunch, my friend asked my views on "covenant friendships". I'd never heard that term, but quickly realized she was referring to sexless committed relationships between members of the same gender. I immediately called them sinful. She was shocked. So was I. Apparently, we don't share what I consider to be fairly cut and dry biblical position on this issue. So I asked her to give me a first hand account of such a relationship that she saw as healthy. She went on to share the story of a Christian lesbian who believes that homosexual behavior is sinful, but holds no hope of ever experiencing heterosexuality. The thought of living a single life was too much for her to bear and so she developed a committed non-sexual relationship with another woman. They held a commitment ceremony, bought a house together, combined their finances and are trying to live happily ever after. They live in separate bedrooms, but in every other sense of the word, they are partners. "What's wrong with that?" my friend asked. Everything.

Talk about selling God short in the "I will supply all of your

needs" category. What about abstaining from all appearances of evil? How about fleeing from temptation? Two same-sex attracted women getting married and pledging their lifelong love and devotion to one another, with or without sex, is called homosexuality. How can we say anything less? There is no such thing as diet homosexuality. If I was going to go as far as these two women have I would just go all the way. It isn't only the sex that makes homosexuality sinful, it is choosing to live outside of God's best. He did not create two men or two women to meet the needs of one another in a spousal capacity. Loneliness isn't grounds for trying to meet your own needs outside of His will, sexually or otherwise.

The story of Abraham and Sarah comes to mind. God promised Abram that he would have a son and that his descendents would be as plentiful as the stars. Abraham expected that God was going to give he and Sarah an heir. By age 86, Abraham and Sarah still had no children or prospects of any. Sarah told Abraham to sleep with her maidservant, Hagar. Abraham did so and she conceived and later bore him a son that they named Ishmael. This wasn't God's plan for them or the heir He had promised and they quickly knew it. Fourteen years later, when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90, God fulfilled His promise and gave them Isaac. I don't know how much you know about world history and how Abraham and Sarah's choices affect us today, but the turmoil that exists in the Middle East – the turmoil that has always existed there – is directly linked to a war between Isaac, the heir God promised, and Ishmael, the product of Abraham and Sarah's impatience.

Our impatience with God and our inability to allow Him to work things out in our lives can lead us to sin. I see the relationship between the two women that I related above as a counterfeit to the intimacy that only God can give and bring through another person. Like Proverbs 13:12 says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but desire fulfilled is a tree of life." Filling the hole in our hearts with anything other

than God's best will make our hearts sick. Whether we call them civil unions, domestic partnerships, same-sex marriage or covenant friendships, the truth of the matter is that these unions are less than the Creator's creative intent for His creation.

So as the Prop 8 debate in California reheats once again, I am reminded that God's plan for marriage transcends our human interpretation of fairness and affection.

Marriage is His idea. It is a reflection of Jesus, the Groom and the church – His bride.

It goes to the core of who God is and who we are in relationship to Him. Repackaging or redefining it in the political or social realm will not change the truth, but we are foolish to try.

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