

We Need to Cast Down This Imagination Quickly

We've been told that people who want to maintain the man-woman definition of marriage are "on the wrong side of history." Perhaps so. Maybe "history," which is determined largely by how people behave, will continue to move toward making marriage genderless in the 90 percent of governments that still maintain the natural definition.

But remember, Moses was on the wrong side of the golden calf. And Lincoln's emancipation proclamation was on the wrong side of *Dred Scott*—the 1857 Supreme Court decision that declared blacks were "so far inferior that they had no rights." Thus, being on the wrong side of some popular moral assertion doesn't necessarily mean that your position is wrong.

Now that five judges say that same-sex marriage is a new "right", I would like to ask a more foundational question: Where do rights come from? Specifically, where does the right to same-sex marriage come from?

If you say that rights come from governments or constitutions, then how can they really be rights? Isn't a right something you have regardless of what a government says? For example, if same-sex marriage is really a right, then you actually possess that right even if you live under a government that doesn't recognize same-sex marriage. You may not be able to exercise it, but you have it nonetheless.

Moreover, if there is no overarching moral standard that transcends human governments, then how could we prosecute Nazi soldiers for violating the rights of others? The Nazis were just following their government.

The truth is rights don't come from men or governments. Instead, "to secure these rights, Governments are instituted

among Men,” as our Founders wrote in the Declaration of Independence. In fact, that was the entire point of the Declaration—the government of King George was usurping the rights of colonists, so we declared our independence.

Doesn't evolution provide us with a right to same-sex marriage? Some make this claim but without thinking it through. If natural selection has a goal of survival, then how could same-sex marriage help with that? Such marriages are an agreement to stay in a sterile and medically unhealthy relationship—the exact antithesis of survival. In fact, if everyone lived faithfully in same-sex marriage, the human race would end quite quickly.

Even if macroevolution is true, moral rights don't result from biological processes. Rights are prescriptive and come from an authoritative person. Biological processes are descriptive and have no authority to tell you what to do. How does a mutating genetic code have the moral authority to tell you how you *ought* to behave or how you *ought* to treat others?

The truth is, just like history describes what does happen and not what *ought* to happen, biology describes what does survive, not what *ought* to survive. Why should humans survive as opposed to anything else? And which humans, we or the Nazis?

Even if one could make the case that evolution somehow makes survival a moral right, we are left with several thorny questions. Isn't self-sacrifice to save others morally superior over your own survival? Should a person murder if it helps him survive? Should a person rape to propagate his DNA? Should a society exterminate the weak and undesirables to improve the gene pool and help the desirables survive? Hitler used evolutionary theory to justify just that. Homosexuals were many of his victims.

So if rights don't come from governments or evolution, then where do they come from? To truly be rights, they can only

come from an authoritative being whose nature is the very standard of perfect Goodness. That's what we mean by God.

Without God there is no authoritative moral standard beyond humanity, which means that every action or behavior is merely a matter of human opinion. The murder of Jews, gypsies and homosexuals? It's just your opinion against Hitler's opinion. Child crucifixions? It's just your opinion against that of ISIS. Freedom of speech? That's just your opinion to that of a dictator. Gay bashing is bad? Again, just your opinion.

The same holds true with any supposed right, including the right to same-sex marriage. While you can get five judges to assert it is a right, without God it is just an opinion (thus the Court's judgment is aptly named).

But couldn't God approve of same-sex marriage?

The major religious books state just the opposite. So does the Natural Law derived from God's nature. Thomas Jefferson called this "Nature's Law" from which we get "self-evident truths" and the fact that people "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights." same-sex marriage is not one of them. In fact, Jefferson and other politically incorrect Founding Fathers called homosexual acts "crimes against nature" because such acts go against the natural design of the body and frustrate the goal of perpetuating humanity. This observation is not based on bigotry but on biology. (It's ironic that our Founding Fathers were more apt to follow science than today's secular left who ignore science when they insist that biological gender is changeable and sexual behavior is not. The exact opposite is true!)

Since real rights can only come from God, if you want to insist same-sex marriage is a right then you must assume that God is for same-sex marriage. But then you must also assume the implausible notion that God wants you to harm your own health and that of the human race by contributing to its

extinction. How's that for love? Don't be fruitful. Don't multiply. Don't survive. Same-sex marriage is not only on the wrong side of God and evolution; it's on the wrong side of humanity.

So if not from governments, evolution or God, where does the "right" to same-sex marriage come from? Our imaginations. Perhaps well intended imaginations, but imaginations nonetheless.

Frank Turek *is the president of , coauthor of I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, and the author of the new book Stealing From God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case.*