

Bishop Calls Out Christian Star of Seedy Reality TV Show

A Church of England bishop has criticized the vicar who stars in a reality TV program where complete strangers marry each other and then decide whether or not to divorce five weeks later.

Rev. Nick Devenish, a vicar at the Church of St. Mary and St. Michael in Cumbria, appears on *Married at First Sight* as part of a panel of experts that also includes a psychologist and two anthropologists.

The Bishop of Manchester, the Rt. Rev. David Walker, said that a Church of England vicar should not appear on the show, which involves “inappropriate and rather seedy behavior.”

‘Experiment’

The Bishop, who has previously expressed liberal views on same-sex marriage, said, “The church wants marriage to be successful and we don’t achieve that by reducing it to a scientific experiment.”

He added, “If he had asked me I would have advised him, ‘Don’t do it,’ but as a clergyman in the Church of England he has the right to do what he sees as right.”

In 2013 reportedly said he would not have voted against the same-sex marriage bill had he been in the House of Lords.

Harry Benson, Research Director of the Marriage Foundation, said the vicar is being “duped” into believing that the ‘science’ being used to match the couples is the “real deal.”

‘Foolish’

“There are all sorts of relationship behaviors that you can teach couples, and this is the kind of thing the Church of England does in marriage preparation programs.

“He genuinely has sympathy for couples who are finding it difficult to find a lifelong partner, but this is a foolish way of going about it,” Benson added.

Rev. Devenish told the *Church Times*: “I do not have any regrets. The Church does want to be part of people’s lives; we need to move ourselves to where the people are.”

‘Horrible’

The Christian Institute has criticized the program, saying it is “horrible for broadcasters to be experimenting with people’s lives in this way.”

The panel pair up individuals with the help of DNA testing and questionnaires.

The couples only meet each other on their wedding day, when they enter a legally-binding marriage before going on a honeymoon and deciding in the coming weeks whether to stay together or divorce.