

SUNDAY ARTICLE

ST DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ♦ 19 NOVEMBER 2017

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA
remains committed to the clear teaching of
Scripture that marriage is defined by God as
a union between one man and one woman
entered into exclusively for life.



Why Can't Christians Just Join the Revolution?

Albert Mohler

Why not just join in?

This question seems obvious to many people who look at conservative Christians and honestly wonder why we cannot just change our views on homosexuality, same-sex marriage, and the entire constellation of LGBT issues.

We are constantly told that we must abandon the clear teachings of the Bible in order to get “on the right side of history.”

But, it's not that we don't understand the argument – we just cannot accept it.

Of course, many liberal denominations and churches have indeed capitulated to the sexual revolution.

As the legitimisation of homosexuality moves forward, some churches and denominations have joined the movement – even becoming advocates – while others steadfastly refuse to compromise.

In the middle – for now – are churches and denominations that are unable or unwilling to declare a clear conviction on homosexuality.

Issues of homosexual ordination and marriage are regularly discussed in the assemblies of several denominations and in many congregations.

Clearly, many of the more liberal churches and denominations are not only accepting that argument, they are running away with it.

Each of these churches once defined marriage exclusively as the union of a man and a woman, and every one of them once defined human sexuality and gender in agreement with the Bible and with historic Christian teachings.

Now, at least some people seem genuinely perplexed that conservative Christians will not just go along with the program to redefine Christian morality, marriage, and doctrine.

We will not because we cannot.

Unlike those who embrace liberal theology, we do not see Christianity as a system of beliefs that we can just change as we see fit.

We do not see the Bible as a mere collection of ancient religious writings that can be disregarded or reinterpreted to mean something other than what it says.

Instead, we understand the Bible to be what it claims to be, nothing less than the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

We understand Christianity to be grounded in specific truths as revealed by Christ and the prophets and Apostles and given to us in the Holy Scriptures.

We believe that Christianity is defined by what the Bible calls “the faith once for all delivered to the saints.”

These days, we find ourselves opposed, dismissed, and ridiculed for holding to truths that the Christian church has taught for two thousand years.

The reality is that Christians who define Christianity in terms of historic Christian doctrine and moral teachings do not believe merely that these teachings are true, but that they point to the only way that will produce real and lasting human happiness.

We are not merely opposed to same-sex marriage because we believe it to be contrary to Scripture; we believe that anything opposed to Scripture cannot lead to human flourishing.

The gospel promises salvation to anyone who repents of sin and believes in Christ as the crucified and resurrected Lord.

If we misunderstand or misrepresent what sin is, we under-cut the work of Christ and our knowledge of the fact that we need a Saviour.

Furthermore, if we abandon the teachings of the Bible on sexual morality, we confuse the world—and ourselves – about repentance.

The Bible is not merely an inspired book of doctrinal truths.

It tells a story of God's act of creation and of the reality of human sin, of the depth of God's saving love for His people in Christ, and the story of where history is headed.

The Bible also warns us against any effort to change that story or to tell it wrongly.

The current Western landscape includes the more liberal churches that are doing their best to join the

sexual revolution and the more conservative churches that cannot follow.

Simple honesty requires acknowledgment that it is the conservative churches that are teaching what Christianity has taught for two millennia.

We are told that holding to biblical authority and the historic Christian faith will lead to our marginalisation.

Perhaps so, but it is the more liberal churches that have been haemorrhaging members by the millions for the last four decades and, even in a secularising age, it is the most secularised denominations that have suffered the greatest membership losses.

We do understand what is at stake in terms of the human judgment of history, but we are far more concerned about the divine verdict of eternity.

We must speak the truth in love and seek to be good neighbours to all, but we cannot abandon the faith just because we are told that we are now on the wrong side of history.

Our response to those who are involved in homosexuality must be marked by genuine compassion.

But a central task of genuine compassion is telling the truth, and

the Bible reveals a true message we must convey.

Those who contort and subvert the Bible's message are not responding to homosexuals with compassion.

Lying is never compassionate – and it leads ultimately to death.

In the end, the church will either declare the truth of God's Word or it will find a way to run away from it.

Do we trust the Bible to tell us truthfully what God desires and commands about our sexuality?

If so, we know where we stand and we know what to say – by God's grace – with calmness, humility, and confidence.

...a central task of genuine compassion is telling the truth...



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