

# SUNDAY ARTICLE

ST DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ♦ 4 SEPTEMBER 2016



## The Bolt Report

David Cook

On Wednesday, 24th August, I agreed to appear and be interviewed on the Bolt Report on the Sky news channel, regarding same sex marriage.

The interview was about 10 minutes, of which Andrew Bolt took half that time in introducing the issue. I had much more to say, but the constraints of national media made it impossible for me to say more than I did. I appreciated the opportunity to speak on behalf of the church and for Andrew Bolt's interest; and here is "the more" of what I had to say, the précis of which I delivered on air.

### What do Presbyterians believe about marriage?

In 2017, the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, our denomination is sponsoring a national outreach campaign under the theme, "Taking God Seriously". The fact that God is the Creator who loves us ought to be taken seriously. In the spirit of this campaign, our church takes the words of the Lord Jesus seriously when He speaks of marriage. Twice, in Matthew 19 and Mark 10, Jesus said that marriage is a union between a man and a woman; a priority, enduring union and a union from which children may be generated.

*Jesus said that marriage is a union between a man and a woman.*

### If there is a Plebiscite, what will be the Presbyterian response?

I urge the Prime Minister to keep his pre-election promise and hold the Plebiscite. I also urge the silent majority not to allow themselves to be silenced by name tagging, such as "bigot", "phobic behaviour". Such tags are really indicative of the vacuous nature of the arguments of those who promote same sex marriage (SSM).

If the Plebiscite is held and lost, and the Marriage Act (1961) revised to incorporate SSM, the General Assembly will consider two proposals:

- 1 The Assembly will be asked to direct all Presbyterian Ministers to no longer conduct marriages under the revised Act.
- 2 The other proposal will leave this decision to the Minister's conscience; some ministers will de-register themselves and others will not. Should the conduct of SSM become mandatory, all remaining Presbyterian Ministers will then withdraw. No Presbyterian Minister is seeking to conduct same sex marriages.

### What will be the impact of the imposition of the Safe School curriculum on Presbyterian schools?

I am amazed that in States such as Victoria, the Government is seeking to usurp parental responsibility to determine the moral environment in which parents' own children will be raised. More and more parents are deciding to home-school or seek private schooling for their children because of the draconian imposition of this propaganda.

Presbyterian schools, by all legal means, will resist such an imposition. Our schools have a religious instruction curriculum, which helps children read and understand the Bible; to understand that life's purpose is to

glorify and enjoy God, and to live a life of love as a result of trusting in the saving work of Jesus.

### Why is this issue so important?

All the indicators tell us that society is not doing well. We believe that when God's order is recognised and respected, society will thrive. We also believe that children thrive when raised by both birth parents.

A Senator in the USA spoke to an African American church in 2008. He made the point that African American children raised in single parent families (mostly single mothers) were 5 times more likely to turn to crime, 9 times more likely to drop out of school and 20 times more likely to end up in prison. The Senator was Barak Obama. In his speech he urged fathers to recognise that their responsibilities to their children do not end at conception.

I applaud our Prime Minister's desire to achieve a bipartisan approach to budget repair, so as not to saddle future generations with debt.

I urge the Prime Minister to show equal concern for the emotional maturing of the next generation, by ensuring that they have access to both their birth Mother and birth Father.

I urge those who support SSM to consider that in their concern to satisfy the desires of some adults, they do not, in the process, sacrifice the needs of all of our children.

***Truth is static and objective. It cannot be changed to conform to my feelings.***

This Plebiscite deals with the nature of marriage, but the deeper issue is one of consequence. If SSM is approved, it will lead to a further blurring of distinctives between men and women. The ultimate consequence will be the eradication of gender.

In the Safe Schools curriculum we are seeing concrete evidence of what will become common.

Can you imagine your children or grandchildren, as minors, boys being told to role-play being a girl and girls as boys; and as children being asked to imagine what it would be like in a single gender relationship.

Imagine, no girls' and boys' toilets, but unisex toilets.

Imagine children being urged to think about which gender they would prefer to grow up as, and choosing to be henceforth known as a "he" or "she".

Imagine your children being told that only they can determine which gender they are. Imagine!!

Welcome to Daniel Andrews Victoria, 2017.

**Ms Grainne Healy, who organised the SSM campaign in Ireland is encouraging our Government not to hold a plebiscite. She said that many LGBTI supporters were hurt by arguments used to support traditional marriage. Your response?**

As a Christian Pastor, I don't like to see peoples' feelings hurt or to be the cause of the hurt. We are dealing here with truth and feelings. I have control of my feelings but not of truth. Truth is static and objective. It cannot be changed to conform to my feelings. Rather, my feelings need to come to terms with truth.

I am a Preacher. If I never preached if peoples' feelings might be hurt as a result, I would never preach. It is unacceptable that truth be denied to the population for fear of hurting the feelings of the few.

We need to respectfully and clearly state the truth.

I am sure that such a debate can be held in Australia and I urge the media to so respect the people that they allow the open publication of both arguments.



*The Right Reverend David Cook is the Moderator-General of the Presbyterian Church of Australia*

Source: [www.presbyterian.org.au/index.php/resources/moderator-s-comments/118-the-bolt-report](http://www.presbyterian.org.au/index.php/resources/moderator-s-comments/118-the-bolt-report)

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