

“Gay Marriage” is NOT Marriage. Here’s Why.



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(This article first appeared in the July/August edition of *The New Oxford Review*)

On May 9, 2012 President Obama sat before Robin Roberts of ABC’s “Good Morning America” and announced that he supports the right of homosexuals to legally marry one another. In this nationally televised interview he explained “I’ve been going through an evolution of this issue.” He told Roberts that he initially hesitated to support “gay marriage” because, as he went on to explain: “I thought civil unions would be sufficient ... that it would give people hospital visitation rights and other elements we take for granted. And I was sensitive to the fact that for a lot of people the word ‘marriage’ was something that evokes very powerful traditions, religious beliefs and so forth.” He concluded his announcement by saying: “[A]t a certain point I’ve just concluded that for me personally it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same sex couples should be able to get married.”

Obama’s statement came only three days after Vice President Joe Biden revealed on “Meet the Press” May 6, that he was: “absolutely comfortable with the fact that men marrying men, women marrying women, and heterosexual men and women marrying another are entitled to the same exact rights, all the civil rights, all the civil liberties. And quite frankly, I don’t see much of a distinction beyond that.” Biden, who identifies himself as a Catholic, is also more than “absolutely comfortable” with the legalized killing of the unborn. Thus no one should be too shocked that this politician would also have a distorted view of marriage.

Many political commentators believe that indeed it was Biden’s own disclosure of his views on “gay marriage” that made it imperative that Obama follow suit. For example, the online magazine *Politico* stated that: “Biden’s statement of personal support for same-sex marriage ... did indeed force the hand of the administration to let the cat out of the bag early. The Obama administration initially tried to tamp down Biden’s remarks, but the distancing angered gay rights activist groups that are a key constituency for the Democratic party. Thus, Obama went ahead and pulled the trigger on his epiphany.”

Obama placed his backing of “gay marriage” within the context of a personal evolution. However, this evolution has taken an odd path, with twists, turns and retracing of steps, that one can conclude Obama has always believed that the law should recognize and sanction homosexual bonds as the equal of marriage. This was his view back in 1996 when he ran for Illinois State Senate. Then he said in 2008 he was against “gay marriage” in his bid for the presidency. Apparently Obama’s views on gay marriage, up until now, depended on what political office he hoped to secure. I think we can safely conclude there has been no real moral evolution—that his 1996 views were his real views all along.

But it is one thing to believe something privately—and another to make one’s views known to an entire nation. In this case Obama’s support for “gay marriage” carries enormous moral and social impact and such advocacy will contribute to furthering the gay-rights movement’s goal to legally re-define the meaning of marriage. Imagine if former president Jimmy Carter had sat down with a reporter in 1976 and declared his support for the right to life of the unborn—and his opposition to the then only three-year-old *Roe v. Wade* decision. We might be looking at a very different Democratic party if someone in his position had defended the unborn before the Democrats finalized its embrace of “abortion rights.”

This article is not a full-blown treatise on the subject of so-called “gay marriage.” I intend here to provide some concise arguments as to why same-sex sexual activity is not the moral, social, cultural equal to heterosexual marital unions—and thus should not be granted equal status in law. In addition, I will also explain who or what is to blame for the moral and intellectual break-down on the subject of marriage represented by the current advocacy for “gay marriage.”

Legal recognition of homosexual bonds as marital bonds ultimately means that gender, human sexuality, being a husband or a wife, motherhood and fatherhood have no objective moral meaning. This also means that the family itself has no objective moral meaning. The moral law rooted in nature is completely dissolved. There would no longer be any natural familial moral bonds, thus no longer any natural moral ties and thus no innate moral responsibilities arising from the very nature of the family.

If the bond between two men or two women may be considered the equivalent of the one-flesh marital unity between a man and a woman, a bond that gives rise to children and the family, we are then saying that all human ties are strictly a matter

of the will—only when *persons choose* to be connected to one another—by emotional, legal or artificial contrivance—are they then connected. And if the fundamental building block of society, namely the family, is essentially a matter of choice, those choices can be *undone* by mere personal volition. The family simply becomes simply a fragile arrangement of the will—no one is in *essence* a mother, a father, a husband or wife. The family unit is turned into a mere fragile arrangement of personal volition. Indeed, being a husband or wife, mother or father is nominal, not real.

The family is no longer a unit cemented by innate natural familial bonds that actually cause persons to *be* mother and child, brother and sister—essential identities imbedded in nature itself that produce inherent responsibilities to which persons who have such identities must be held accountable. Nothing here should be interpreted to mean that sterile couples who adopt children are not parents. Their heterosexual marital unity, unlike homosexual pairings, participates in the truth of marriage and is a public sign of that truth. A married couple who are incapable of procreating children by a pathology—nonetheless are still capable of honoring the life-giving *meaning* of their sexual intimacy. Their bond still contributes to the public support of the cultural, social and moral meaning of marriage. Their sexual unity is oriented towards life and the family in a way that gay sexual activity can never be.

It is simply a lie that lesbian or homosexual acts are equivalent to sexual activity between a wedded man and woman. I will even go on and say that making them equivalent is an insult to the very meaning of marriage and the family. Gay sex is self-enclosed, of itself sterile and a societal dead-end. Since the family cannot come from such sex—the government does not have a compelling interest in protecting such unions.

Why must the law protect marriage—and when I say “marriage” I mean, of course, the lifelong bond between a man and a woman upon which the family is built? Sex between a married man and woman is categorically different from gay sex. It is sex that confirms the meaning of masculinity and femininity—and it is sex that confers responsibilities that arise from the commitment of husbands and wives, especially when, from such sexual acts, new human beings are conceived. Society, *indeed the entire future of the world*, depends on these kinds of stable sexual unions that provide the necessary innate security for children. For this reason alone, the government has an interest in protecting marriage.

Indeed if someone needs a cogent argument as to why the government must make a distinction between homosexual bonds and marriage—here it is: When a man and woman commit themselves to a lifelong unity of their persons—it is this type of union that leads to the begetting of children. The state has an interest in recognizing and protecting the unity between spouses and the natural blood relationships that are created by sexual marital activity. We need to take very seriously the importance of blood-ties in the building of society and culture. It is indeed, these innate blood-ties that societies actually depend on for moral order and structure—beginning with the bond between a man and a woman that then creates the natural bonds of blood within the family itself. There is simply no substitution for this kind of cultural/societal building block. The state must support and protect marriage itself that creates the dynamic of the family unit, the unit that gives society its most sure, built-in, stable set of human identities and responsibilities.

Society is *not* the consequence of arbitrary self-willed human relationships. Of course engaged couples “choose” each other—but they do not choose the actual meaning of marriage. They do not “decide for themselves”— what it is they are about to enter. The meaning of marriage precedes them. As stated above, marriage, as it is related to the building of the family, not only produces identity and responsibilities within the “limited” nuclear family— it is the first building block that creates, not only brothers and sisters, but future marriages that produce cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, grandfathers, grandmothers, great grandfathers and mothers, as well as great uncles and aunts. Laws do not create these worlds—innate natural bonds—blood ties— create these worlds—worlds that of themselves cause human identity and human responsibilities. Absolutely nothing can replace such natural world-building! And the law cannot create the moral responsibilities that come from such bonds—it can only call persons to live up to them! Again, for this reason, government has an interest in protecting marriage.

How did we come to this point—that homosexual bonds should be considered the equivalent of marriage? The truth must be told. It is indeed the heterosexual community that is to blame, not homosexuals. Heterosexuals have given up on the meaning of human sexuality. Heterosexuals are the ones who no longer believe in marriage. We have said so with 50 years of contraception, unquestioned sexual activity outside of marriage, living together without marriage, rampant divorce, including no-fault divorce, epidemic out-of-wedlock pregnancy rates, artificial reproduction—and then add to this— 40 years of abortion. Heterosexuals have

already said that sex, marriage and the family have no meaning—these become what we subjectively, privately, by a sheer matter of the will, say they are—and nothing more. We simply have no moral, cultural place to stand upon which we may say that homosexuals can't call what they do "marriage." After all, most heterosexual activity isn't marriage either! It too is dead-end sex that cannot carry the world into the future. I think it would do well to consider the words of the late British philosopher Elizabeth Anscombe who way back in 1972 already saw where sex made deliberately sterile would lead:

“And if there is nothing intrinsically wrong with contraceptive intercourse, and if it could become general practice everywhere when there is intercourse but ought to be no begetting, then it's very difficult to see the objection to this morality, for the ground of objection to fornication and adultery was that sexual intercourse is only right in the sort of set-up that typically provides children with a father and mother to care for them. If you can turn intercourse into something other than the reproductive type of act (I don't mean of course that every act is reproductive any more than every acorn leads to an oak-tree but it's the reproductive type of act) then why, if you can change it, should it be restricted to the married? Restricted, that is, to partners bound in a formal, legal, union whose fundamental purpose is the bringing up of children? For if that is not its fundamental purpose there is no reason why for example "marriage" should have to be between people of opposite sexes. But then, of course, it becomes unclear why you should have a ceremony, why you should have a formality at all. And so we must grant that children are in this general way the main point of the existence of such an arrangement. But if sexual union can be deliberately and totally divorced from fertility, then we may wonder why sexual union has got to be married union. If the expression of love between the partners is the point, then it shouldn't be so narrowly confined.” (*Contraception and Chastity*)

What is the answer ultimately? If we really want to fight a battle against “gay marriage” the heterosexual community needs to get its act together. We can't carry on the way we have—we cannot privatize our sexual ethical behavior and then claim that the government needs to publicly protect what's left of the institution of marriage. This healing of the sexual ethic is primarily the work of the Church—a Church that greatly contributed to the cultural moral demise by remaining silent on contraception and by allowing Catholic politicians to support

legalized abortion with ecclesial impunity. Is it any wonder that the likes of Catholic Nancy Pelosi, who supports legalized killing of the unborn contrary to the teachings of the Church, lauds Obama's support for "gay marriage" also contrary to the teachings of the Church and, like Obama, even dares to say that this is the Christian thing to do!

And in some ways this is the most odious and insulting aspect of the entire Obama "gay marriage" debacle. Obama justified his position that "gay marriage" should be legally recognized by wrapping it in the Christian religion. He said that his so-called evolution on the subject was the consequence of his Christian faith and he told ABC News: "It's also the Golden Rule, you know, treat others the way you would want to be treated." So with such deep critical thinking—how can we deny homosexuals access to a right that heterosexuals enjoy? It just isn't fair.

Unfortunately Obama failed to quote Christ's own doctrine on marriage: "Have you not read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and declared: 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall become one' Thus they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, let no man separate what God has joined" (Mt. 19: 4-6). Jesus, in the next passages, even dares to forbid divorce and remarriage.

If Obama is going to credit Christianity in an attempt to dismantle the God-given meaning of marriage, it would only be truly fair and honest of him to acknowledge Christ's specific view on the subject. But for Obama the Golden Rule is real doctrine and Christ's view on marriage merely an opinion that may be set aside.

Obama's application of the Golden Rule in this case is completely misplaced. Of course Christ called us to: "treat others as you would wish to be treated." But if society seriously accepted Obama's invocation of the Golden Rule we would have to advocate all sorts of irrationalities. After all, saying gays have the right to marry as do heterosexuals would require an end to all rational distinctions. For example, if Obama's view of the Golden Rule were truly applied in a consistent manner we would have to believe that not only those who excel at running the 100 meters but even poor runners have just as much right to compete in the Olympics—since all that matters is that the poor runners also love the sport and wish to participate in it as much as the good runners. Obama's application of the gospel is like saying those who are tone deaf should be allowed to sing at major concert halls, since such persons may actually love and have an appreciation for music—even more than those who actually have the ability to sing. After all, if Obama really put his version of the Golden Rule into practice then track stars

and great vocalists must allow poor runners and bad singers to do what they do since Christ said: “treat others as you would wish to be treated.” Obama’s Golden Rule is not about love and acceptance at all, rather it’s a means by which the truth is distorted. Thus Obama’s gospel is not the Wisdom of Christ, but an invitation to insanity.

Those who defend marriage as an institution between one man and one woman face fierce opposition. Gay rights activists, and their allies in the media, accuse defenders of marriage of being motivated from hate—a hate based on a narrow-minded intolerance, sheer bigotry, and an out-dated religious point of view. This depiction is intended to discredit and demoralize those who are opposed to “gay marriage” and circumvent any possible debate on the subject. Gay rights activists argue that to deny persons with same-sex attraction the right to marry is to deny them the personal happiness and sense of dignity that heterosexuals enjoy—and thus the fairness card is played as a way to elevate such partnerships to the level of marriage.

Defense of marriage has nothing to do with hate. Rather this entire controversy has to do with the nature of objective reality itself. It has to do with the essence of what it means to be embodied persons and the way in which such embodiment leads to the foundation of the family. Those who oppose “gay marriage” are simply unwilling to locate the foundation of marriage and the family in precarious human feelings and emotions—which is the primary value upon which gay unions are formed and legitimized. No one can deny that such feelings are real, that such love is real, that the need for human intimacy between homosexuals and lesbians is real. It is simply that such private need is not the moral, legal equivalent of the institution of marriage, parenthood and the family that government has a duty to protect.

We must recognize that we are in a war for the truth, and it is a moral battle. This is not a time to be afraid to speak the truth. But speak always the truth in love—recognizing that homosexual persons have God-given dignity and basic human rights—and those rights must never be denied. But they simply do not have the right to marry—they do not have the rights to the privileges of marriage. Those who publicly defend marriage are going to be misunderstood, called names, mocked, belittled and derided. Nonetheless, those who understand what is at stake cannot hold back—the truth must be defended and marriage fought for—as civilization itself depends upon this sacred institution.