

## **San Francisco, Strange Marriages, and the Churches of America**

The cry of outrage from conservatives and evangelicals concerning the recent gay marriage issue was predictable. What decent person wouldn't be outraged? However, the outcry is "too little" and "too late."

The homosexual assault is indeed a real threat—but it is symptomatic of deeper problems. Cultural terrorism, as displayed in recent events, is only effective in a terribly weakened culture.

President Bush has called for an amendment to the Constitution which would bar same-sex marriages. Many think this would salvage the failing institution of matrimony and rein in a prolonged preservation of the traditional family.

The same sentiment was displayed when the DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) was enacted. However, the weakness of the legislative approach is that while it may halt external vice temporarily, it can never instill virtue.

The Constitution of the United States rests on the character of its people. John Adams said our form of government was made for a moral and religious people. Without the restraint of conscience and the biblical moral code, our form of government cannot survive indefinitely.

This brings us to the main point. You have just got to wonder about the silence of the Christian Right concerning the relentless accommodation of the American churches. Maybe I missed it, but where was the "traditional values" crowd when the mainline churches have compromised time and time again.

Where were the Christian activists when a hundred ordained United Methodist ministers co-officiated a lesbian commitment ceremony in Sacramento back in 1999?

You have got to wonder where the outcry was when the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. allowed Erin Swenson to retain his/her status as a minister even though he/she/it had a sex change operation!

Where are the would-be cultural custodians now that thirty American Baptist Churches have declared a “welcoming and affirming” stance on gay and lesbian participation in the church? On and on it goes.

Why jump on the mayors and demand action from Congress when the same crowd has given a pass to the liberal denominations for years? I have yet to hear demands for discipline and dismissal of disqualified clergymen from the activists. I guess it is acceptable to march lock step with perversion as long as it lies in a religious or denominational context. Where’s the logic in holding society to a higher standard than the apostate churches? This sickening duplicity should be rebuked.

Spurgeon said, “Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin.” Could it be the reason our nation has no conscience is because millions of church members and tens of thousands of voiceless shepherds have no conscience? Blindly supporting corruption for the sake of “unity” contradicts faithfulness to the Scripture and the Christ of God.

Jesus said, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Serial matrimony in the churches has become so common that it is seldom questioned or addressed. From a Biblical point of view marriage is a covenant (permanent union). God has

declared marriage holy and reflective, not cultural, but transcendent—a picture of Christ and His church.

“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery” (Luke 16:18). Strong words!

There was a time when Bible-believing churches would discipline members who violated their marriage vow. Now scores of churches have pastors who have broken that covenant and are encouraged to model infidelity by remaining in the pastorate.

Biblical marriage is heterosexual, permanent, and all about raising a godly seed. It seems reasonable to me that one of the primary means to restore respect for the institution of marriage would be for Christian people and churches to practice what the Scripture teaches!

When the obvious must be stated, it is not a sign America is at a crossroads—it indicates we are already a long way down the wrong road!

God, not the state, has ordained the institution of marriage. Therefore, we as Christians must affirm its importance and increase our efforts to uphold it, rather than coalesce to the wholesale abandonment to all God has declared holy.

Harold Vaughan

March 3, 2004

[www.christlifemin.org](http://www.christlifemin.org)