**DEFINING MARRIAGE**

***How Do You Read Romans 1?***

Just as Thomas Edison had the “right” to name the phonograph, the incandescent light bulb, and the motion picture camera because he was their inventor, just so God has the “right” to define marriage because He created it. He said “*male and female*” would make up the marriage of two people (Gen. 1:27). It has remained this way throughout all recorded history. Every civilization known to humanity has accepted God’s order of marriage. Not even decadent Rome changed that custom. Until now.

For those who believe the Bible is God’s authorized rule book for all men (2 Tim. 3:16-17), you will have no confusion as to what God means when He writes Romans 1. Regarding marriage God is not ambiguous. He doesn’t leave us in doubt. He speaks plainly for all to know exactly what He wants. He doesn’t ask our opinion on the matter. Read the following text of Romans 1 and draw your own conclusion:

“*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness … Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting*" *(Romans 1:18, 24-28)*

America, built on the motto, “In God We Trust,” has now scoffed at His authority. Our government has legislated His divine order for marriage out of existence. They have redefined this divine institution. As with Rome, God has “*given them up to uncleanness, exchanging the truth of God for the lie*.” Heaven must surely be weeping.

On May 17th, 2004 America began its long slippery slide into ungodliness regarding marriage. On that date Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. In the short span of just 16 years, America, by a landmark Supreme Court 5-4 decision on June 26, 2015, has now legalized same-sex marriage in all 50 states. This tsunami has hit our country and will now be with us into the future.

Since the turn of the century twenty-nine nations of the world have legalized homosexual marriage. Here is the rundown. Read it and weep. The Netherlands (2000), Belgium (2003), Canada (2005), Spain (2005), South Africa (2006), Norway (2008), Sweden (2009), Argentina (2010), Portugal (2010), Iceland (2010), Denmark (2012), Uruguay (2013), Brazil (2013), New Zealand (2013), England and Wales (2013), France (2013), Luxembourg (2014), Scotland (2014), USA (2015), Ireland (2015), Finland (2015), Greenland (2015), Columbia (2016), Malta (2017), Australia (2017), Germany (2017), Austria (2019), Taiwan (2019), Ecuador (2019), Northern Ireland (2019), Costa Rica (2020).

With this tidal wave sweeping across not only our nation but the entire world it was only a matter of time until those standing up to preach against it would be condemned as hatemongers and homophobes and challenged in the courts with hate-speech. In 2014 Anise Parker, the lesbian mayor of Houston, issued five Houston preachers subpoenas for their sermon notes to stop their “hate-speech.” This is now where we stand. The pressure has only escalated these past six years.

The homosexual organizers are now demanding we accept their “alternative lifestyle” as main-stream and will begin suing all those who stand up and preach the gospel, exercising not only their right to free-speech, but primarily their duty to define marriage as God defined it.

Hear me on this, I deeply love every soul God has created, wanting only their salvation, including every homosexual. I have had a number of Bible studies with those claiming homosexual preferences and have taught them exactly as I would teach any heterosexual. God “*desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth*” (I Tim. 2:5); and is “*not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance*.” (2 Pet. 3:9). Jesus “*came into the world to save sinners*” (I Tim. 1:15), coming to “*seek and save the lost*” (Lk. 19:10). A soul is precious and priceless, “*of more value than all the world*” (Matt. 16:26), and I want everyone to “*know the truth*” to be set free (Jn. 8:31-32). But I cannot, and will not, redefine marriage in contradiction to what God has spoken!

You have read Romans 1:18-32. What do you say? What does it mean? You decide.

Now read Hebrews 13:4. *“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”* Fornication is the Greek word *PORNEIA* and includes all forms of sexual defilement, including adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9), incest (I Cor. 5:1), beastiality (Levit. 18:23), and homosexuality (Jude 7). Paul put it bluntly, *“It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality* (i.e. fornication)*, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.”* Man, woman. Husband, wife.There you have it, only a married couple of a man and woman have a right to sexual relations. Everything else is *PORNEIA.*

I do not enjoy talking about such matters as this. Whether it is heterosexual or homosexual sins, it is all the same to God. I repeat, “*Fornicators and adulterers God will judge*.” One sin is no different than another, including sexual sins. God, as creator of marriage, defined it as between man and woman. To change that is to stand in condemnation of God at the day of Judgment. We are living in an age of rapid change, including the redefining of marriage. Therefore, I pray this verse: “*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people*” (Prov. 14:34). I hope you pray it too.

To America, with love.

– Rick