Religious Commentary by Dr. John E. Warren - San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

There has been so much said about the issue of "Gay Marriage" that it appears that the whole reason for "marriage as we know it has been lost in the discussion. I would like to provide a brief reminder because this topic is not one of "political correctness, but one of what God's law says. First, marriage as we know it, according to biblical teaching is a relationship between a man and a woman. Those of us who profess belief in God's word as recorded in the Bible accept Genesis 2:22, 23, and 24 which says "And the rib, which the Lord God, had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

God's ideal plan for marriage is one man for one woman for one lifetime. This union has become a family when children are born to it and it takes a man and a woman to produce children which are a reflection of both parents. When God created the animals, he made them male and female for the purpose of continuing their species. So God set in the beginning Adam and Eve and not Adam and Steve.
Marriage is a "covenant relationship". A covenant is different from a contract, even though marriage is reference by law as a "marriage contract". A contract requires an offer, acceptance of the offer and mutual consideration by the parties for a "specified" time. A covenant, by definition is more than a contract. It is an agreement—both spiritual and physical—entered into by both parties for life. It can only be broken by the death of one of the two making it.

A covenant involved blood, and today the only difference is, it is symbolic. In the ancient world, an animal was killed and divided in half, the covenant-making parties walked through the blood signifying that only death and blood could break the agreement. When God made his covenant with Abraham, he required Abraham to take a heifer of three years old, a she-goat of three, a male ram of three years old, and a turtle dove and a pigeon place them on an altar and "divide" them down the middle (Genesis 15 chapter).

Circumcision was important to the marriage covenant. When God established circumcision for the Hebrew male child on the eighth day of his life, cutting away of the fore skin represented

that male generation's blood contribution to one's personal covenant with God. The act of consummation of marriage with sex between the man and woman for the first time resulted in the breaking of the hymen. Her bleeding represented her blood contribution to the union that now made them "one flesh" between a man and woman as was written in Genesis 2:24.

The marriage "vows' traditionally taken are consistent with covenant. Notice they end with "until death do you part". This is a lifetime commitment which was not intended for divorce, but man made divorce necessary, not God (divorce is a topic for another discussion).

How does man change that which God has instituted since marriage between a man and a woman is a covenant relationship "ordained" by God?

There can be no marriage relationship between two men or two women when marriage itself is by definition and nature—a covenant relationship that God has established between a man and a woman.

It is written in Leviticus that homosexuality is a sin punishable by death in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, according to the Book of Roman's, it causes God to give up those who practice it to their "reprobate minds." Identifying one's conduct as sinful does not mean that God hates the sinner. He loves the sinner, but hates the sin.
And because he hates all sin, he is bound by his word to impose judgment. This does not mean that some of us are better than others. Roman's 3:23 says that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" What is different is that God does allow forgiveness of sin.

Man has the power and ability to establish "civil unions" between same-sex persons and to call such Unions contracts, but those must be outside of the church since they are in conflict with God's word. God's word on this issue is not "evolving". It is set by God. Man cannot change what God has created to suit his or her comfort level.

The fact that a same sex couple can adopt children by law does not make that arrangement a "family". God has already defined "mother and father". Man can't change this fact through

"political correctness". The fact that at least eight states "permit" "gay marriage" does not mean that it's okay with God. There is no gay marriage issue. There is for the church only the issue of what God says, and what man is willing to accept.

Why do we deny same-sex marriage and put such emphasis on what the Bible teaches? In 2 Timothy the Apostle Paul writes: "I charge, thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word. Be instant in season, and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. Finally, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," (Timothy 3:16).

Since God allows us to make choices as to how we live, we can do no less for each other. But permission, is not acceptance.