

Series: God & Our Culture #1530

Title: Matthew 19, Mark 10, Leviticus 18
God Speaks on Same-Sex Marriage

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. In these days together we find our faith facing an issue, that of gay marriage or same-sex marriage. “Marriages” (and I put that word in quotation marks), “marriages” between a man and a man and woman and a woman are now common. This is true globally. In fact, several other countries were ahead of the United States on making gay marriage legal. Some did it through legislatures and some through the courts.

On June 26, 2015 the United States Supreme Court made same-sex marriage legal across the country with its ruling in the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case. The majority of the justices said that the fundamental right to marry is guaranteed to same-sex couples by both the Due Process Clause and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. The 5–4 ruling requires all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the Insular Areas to perform and recognize the marriages of same-sex couples on the same terms and conditions as the marriages of opposite-sex couples, with all the accompanying rights and responsibilities. Prior to *Obergefell*, same-sex marriage had already been established by statute, court ruling, or voter initiative in thirty-six states, also the District of Columbia, and Guam.

That is what happened in the courts of our land, and this was and is high treason against the High Court of Heaven! Making legal what God has made abominable, that is morally revolting, is part of the reason America is now living under the judgment of Almighty God. And I am going to prove this to you from the Bible soon, primarily in the Book of Romans. But first, I want to remind you that contrary to popular opinion from the homosexual community, Jesus, the Son of God *did* speak to same-sex marriage and He did so in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. I want to make certain you see this in the text, so come with me to Matthew chapter 19.

The Lord is answering a question about divorce, and Jesus quotes Genesis 1! Jesus quotes the Bible. Listen to Him now, “[Jesus] answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning made them male and female,’⁵ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

And then flip or scroll to Mark’s Gospel chapter 10. In Mark 10, verses 6-9 Jesus again speaks to marriage. This is *Jesus* speaking, “From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.⁷ For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother,⁸ and the two shall become one flesh; so they are no longer two, but one flesh.⁹ What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” Notice how Jesus emphasizes “from the beginning of creation.” That draws us right back to the Book of Genesis, chapters 1 and 2. And this tells us that what was true then, the same is true as Jesus speaks, and then by way of application as He still speaks to us *today* through this Bible. In other words, what was true for Adam and Eve (the first marriage) is true for every marriage ever since and until the end of time.

You see, God’s design for marriage – forever and for always – is this: one *man* as one flesh with one *woman* for one-lifetime. The lifetime is emphasized in verse 9, “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.” It is God’s intention and command that your marriage and my marriage lasts this lifetime. Quick and easy divorces are not part of the plan of God. In fact, in the Book of Malachi we learn that “God hates divorce.” And what is crucial to point out to homosexuals is that marriage is between a man and a woman, not between couples of the same-sex. When in conversation with someone promoting and supporting gay “marriage,” you will want to have Matthew 19 and Mark 10 on the tip of your tongue. Please be prepared to share this *truth* with others.

Dear Christian, demonstrate to people that what you believe about marriage comes not from your political party affiliation, not from an angry and hateful heart, not from old fashioned values handed down to you from your great grandparents. What you believe about marriage comes from...the Bible!

Remember that man holding the sign that said Jesus says nothing about gay marriage? That man was *wrong*. Maybe he hasn't read the Gospels? Jesus addresses gay marriage in this sense: He re-affirms what Genesis says. Marriage is between one man and one woman. Period. And of course the man with the sign has, as we all have, the freedom of the will to go up against God. He can easily set the Bible aside (ignore it), or he can take up the Bible and work at re-interpreting it. He can even attend churches where the gay and lesbian "pastor" ministers to him. All over my neighborhood I see churches that fully embrace homosexuality and same-sex marriages. This can and does happen in our morally corrupt society.

But then God acts to condemn those who redefine marriage! It is not that people have good excuses for changing marriage from opposite-sex to same-sex. The Law of God written on the conscience speaks and convicts. And in God's written revelation we have just heard Jesus speak. God is clear. This is not a grey area. This is a black and white area. You have a choice. And it really is *you* who can choose. Will you take God's Word for it or the words of men and women for it? As Christians who cherish God's infallible Word and take it literally, we side with *God*. What about you?

Someone might offer about now, "Mark, Mark, Mark, you are being a bit harsh here. Where is your sense of grace? Judgment, condemnation, a black and white area? You're never going to draw anyone to Jesus talking this way." I can imagine this thought trickling through someone's mind, maybe even yours. So let me take up this thought and address it, briefly, from...the Bible. Turn with me, if you can, to Leviticus chapter 18. This is the third Book of the Bible, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible, Leviticus 18. I will begin reading at verse 1 in a moment.

In this chapter God is giving laws related to sexual practices and what we read provides a sharp contrast between how the people of Israel (God's people) were to live versus the way the pagan people surrounding them lived, people like the Canaanites. As part of this, we must highlight what God says about homosexuality, specifically gay sex. I am at Leviticus 18, beginning in verse 1, **"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² 'Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'I am the Lord your God. ³ You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes. ⁴ You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God. ⁵ So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord.'"**

God establishes – loud and clear – His authority. He is the Lord! Now drop down to verse 22. This is Leviticus 18, verse 22, **"You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination."** Why do I say homosexuality and same-sex marriage is an abomination to God? Why have I been firm? Hear again, dear friends, the Lord speaking in Leviticus 18.22, "You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination." Homosexual relationships between men are an abomination. This obviously includes so-called "marriage" relations.

To show you how seriously God takes this, come over with me to Leviticus chapter 20 and notice please the punishment for a man having sexual relations with another man. I am at Leviticus 20, verse 13, **"If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them."** What was the penalty for homosexuality in the Hebrew Bible? The answer is the death penalty! From God's perspective homosexual sex was punishable by death! You cannot get more serious than that.

Now, in most of the world anyway, we do not put homosexuals to death. And we must not! A proper, biblical understanding of God's Law, of Jesus' perfect fulfilment of the Law, and of our relationship in the church to the Law as contrasted to ancient Israel's relationship to the Law – a proper understanding we do not have time to talk about now. When we grasp that understanding we will see why the Bible no longer requires the death penalty for homosexuality.

That being said, God still finds same-sex marriage detestable. His standard on this has not changed, even with the death penalty removed. God hates all sin, and homosexuality is perversion, an abomination that distorts God's created order for marriage. And those who practice it will die a *spiritual death*. More on what the Bible says about same-sex marriage next time because God Is!

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