

## **Position Paper: Same-Sex Marriages**

The primary mission of the Philadelphia Church is to deliver Jesus' words about patient endurance (Rev 3:10). These words are the good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13 & 10:22). This is the gospel that must be proclaimed to the world as a witness to all nations before the end of the age comes (v. 14). Therefore, the Philadelphia Church has been consistently silent on social issues that cannot be resolved until Satan no longer reigns over the mental topography of humanity. One such issue is homosexual behavior. The person who has been drawn from the world (John 6:44, 65) and has had the laws of God written on his or her heart and placed in his or her mind will fight against the law of sin and death that still dwells in the person's flesh. This person is sanctified through having been drawn by the Father and thereby made holy. This person is justified by putting on Christ's righteousness as a cloak. And this person will still sin, or lose battles to the law of sin that continues to reside in the person. But there is no condemnation of this person as long as he or she remains in covenant with the Father and the Son. The covenant has placed the person's judgment in his or her hands. The person knows whether he or she is a hypocrite, knowing to keep the laws of God and not keeping them. The person knows whether through spiritual weakness and the strength of the flesh he or she loses inner battles to sin and death. The person knows whether he or she has made a good faith effort to defeat the flesh. And until the person is liberated from bondage to sin at the second Passover, the disciple who has struggled against strongholds of behavior contrary to the law of Moses remains Christ's servant, with his or her judgment a manner between the person and Christ Jesus. The Philadelphia Church's position is that all sexual relations outside of marriage are lawlessness, or sin (1 John 3:4). Disciples who are ruled by the laws of God will not engage in any sexual relations outside of marriage.

The above position leaves open the question of same-sex marriages, civil unions between individuals clearly prohibited from being joined in marriage by the law of Moses. These unions are made in the world, and are between individuals who are of the world, who are sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2). Every disciple was at one time such a son of disobedience (vv. 1–8). The disciple didn't choose God, but God chose the disciple (John 15:16). The disciple would be as other sons of disobedience are if God had not drawn the person out of the world. Therefore, the disciple's love for the world is revealed through the disciple's effort to prohibit one son of disobedience from entering into a civil union with another son of disobedience. This love presupposes that God is the present ruler of the world. But prophecy reveals when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15 & Dan 7:9–14). The ruler of this present age is Satan who reigns as the prince of the power of the air; he reigns over the mental topography of humanity. Human nature is a received nature through the subconscious mind. Satan doesn't reign over humanity with tanks and assault rifles, but by controlling the mental landscapes of individuals, by controlling the subconscious mind.

When God draws a person from the world, He plants His laws through receipt of the Holy Spirit in a person's subconscious mind. Literally, God begins a war within the person. Ownership of the person's mental landscape changes hands. The person's subconscious mind has a new landlord. The thoughts remain the person's, but the soil in which they sprout and grow now belongs to God. And slowly, usually, the weeds that had flourished when Satan reigned over this mental landscape wither and die now that God reigns as promised over this landscape.

The Apostle John wrote, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15–17). The desires of the flesh include sexual gratification. A person’s hormones make war against a person’s mind, as every adult knows. This war takes teenagers by surprise. Virginity is too often an early casualty, but the war must be fought in disciples until married. Then what had been unlawful becomes lawful. However, marriage is more than the legal gratification of the flesh. Marriage is the occasion or relationship in which human beings can practice oneness or coexistence, the defining attribute of heaven.

Time, or space-time is part of the created universe, made necessary by the apparent solidity of matter. The first three dimensions (length, width, height) stem from matter consisting of points (sub-atomic particles) of no-dimensions held in place by strong or weak force. Time, then, exists to allow for the movement of matter. Time passes as the rate of heavy mass particle decay; space-time retains a small amount of mass as evidenced of the consistency of temperature (three degrees Kelvin) in all quadrants of space. Therefore, time can be written as a function of gravity. And since time can be written as a function of gravity, time exists as part of the creation. Heaven is outside of the created universe; it is another dimension, the primary dimension. As such, time doesn’t exist in this dimension as humanity understands time. Nor does matter. Thus, to avoid the problems of a paradox, what exists in this dimension must coexist with everything else that exists in this dimension. The presence of life precludes the absence of life; thus, life is everlasting. Life exists, as in the name *I AM*. Because there is no passage of time, one moment exists forever. What is alive in the moment will remain alive for the moment remains. Borge used a secular exploration of this concept in his short story, “A Secret Miracle,” to say that artists create for the sake of the artist. But the year that passes in the protagonist’s mind between when the bullet leaves the barrel and strikes him reflects activity apart from the passage of time. This cannot happen inside the creation, but exists as the norm outside the creation. However, all activity must function in unison or unity with all other activity. Beings must function as one entity. This, then, becomes the logic for marriage, where two are joined to become one, even though they remain two.

Marriage has been given to humanity by God to practice coexistence, the state of two beings functioning as one entity. The glue used to make coexistence hold together long enough that mental bonds are formed is the sexual gratification of the flesh. The binding of this relationship is further established through rearing children as a visible model of the spiritual birth and maturation process. And here is where the logic of same-sex marriages runs counter to the laws of God: spiritual heirs of God are not reared by two mothers, or two fathers, but by one mother (the Church) and by one Father (God). Therefore, within the Church, marriage is always between a woman and a man. It is for life. Jesus attached a very narrow meaning to *porneia*, a meaning closer to a marriage that should never have taken place rather than to fornication. So the dissolution of a marriage for reasons such as incompatibility should not occur among disciples—when glorified, all disciples will coexist as one with the Father and the Son. Their practice time is during their spiritual maturation while they remain in bodies of flesh.

Jesus said that Moses gave the circumcised nation of Israel divorce because of the hardness of their hearts. Such hardness should not exist between disciples, who have the laws of God written on their hearts. Paul addressed the situation between believing and unbelieving mates, where the marriage was between a man and a woman. Therefore, in the event that one mate in a civil union with another person of the same sex is drawn by God from the world and called into fellowship, since this union should never have taken place, the person is not in a bound relationship and should separate regardless of whether the mate wishes to continue the relationship.

The justification for dictating separation rests in James' decision coming from the Jerusalem conference (Acts chapter 15). The issue under discussion was whether Gentile converts needed to become physical Israelites before becoming spiritual Israelites. Services were being held in synagogues, where Moses was read every Sabbath (v. 21). These Gentiles were expected to learn the ways of God through hearing Moses read every Sabbath, but circumcised Jews didn't want these heathens in synagogues. Thus, the issue was reduced to just how "clean" do converts need to become before they are allowed to hear Moses read. James said, "Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality [fornication], and from what has been strangled, and from blood" (vv. 19–20). The four things required of Gentile converts before entering the synagogue to hear Moses read every Sabbath are a very low bar to fellowship. Because fornication or sexual immorality was rightfully offensive to those Israelites who live by the laws of God—a principle continued in Paul's instructions to the saints at Corinth (1 Cor 5:1–5)—such immorality must be set aside, or in a person's past before the person enters fellowship with other saints. In Corinth, the issue was a man marrying, or living with his stepmother, a violation of the law of Moses (Lev 18:8). And herein is a mystery of God: Jesus didn't come to abolish the law of Moses (Matt 5:17), which none of the Pharisees were keeping (John 7:19). Rather, Jesus told mocking Pharisees that if a person would not hear Moses and the Prophets, the person wouldn't be convinced by one raised from the dead (Luke 16:31). If a disciple will not hear the words of God in Moses and the Prophets, the person will not hear the words of Jesus nor believe the One who sent Him. Salvation is simple: hear the words of Jesus and believe the Father (John 5:24). Belief is putting into practice the words heard.

The law that separated the Circumcised from the Uncircumcised has been abolished (Eph 2:15 & Heb 8:13). This law is the Sinai covenant, by which the circumcised nation was made holy (Exod 19:5–6). The old written code that was outside circumcised Israelites was placed inside spiritual Israelites through receipt of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual Israelites are made holy by being drawn from the world by God the Father; they are now the holy nation of God (1 Pet 2:9). They are the household of God upon whom judgment has come (1 Pet 4:17). And the laws of God are not far from them, but written on hearts and minds. Moses told the uncircumcised children of the nation that left Egypt that the second covenant mediated by Moses was neither far from them, nor too hard for them to keep (Deu 30:11). And this second covenant mediated by Moses (Deu chapters 29 through 31) forms the visible shadow of the spiritual covenant mediated by Christ Jesus. The better promise of the eternal covenant is receipt of the spiritual birth through the Holy Spirit prior to obedience to God. Under Moses, spiritual circumcision of the heart and soul [*naphesh* or mind], a euphemistic expression for receipt of the Holy Spirit, followed demonstrated obedience.

The mystery of God is that when a disciple is ruled by the laws of God written on his or her heart and mind, the disciple will keep the commandments uttered from atop Mt. Sinai. The disciple will live as a spiritual Judean. The disciple will walk blameless by faith before God as Abraham walked blameless (Gen 26:5). The disciple will follow the Lamb of God wherever He leads (Rev 14:1–4) though keeping the commandments and holding to the faith of Jesus (Rev 12:17). So the teachers of lawlessness who Jesus will deny knowing in their judgment (Matt 7:21–23) that label living within the laws of God as *legalism* will perish in the lake of fire because the book of Deuteronomy exists as a witness against them (Deu 31:26). Jesus' words are the second witness. And upon the testimony of two witnesses, a matter is established.

When disciples live within God's laws written on hearts and minds, they figuratively clean the inside of the cup. The physical or outward practices of these disciples take care of themselves. The entirety of the cup is clean when its inside is polished through a disciple redeeming his or her time to practice walking blamelessly by faith. These disciples have the law of Moses as a mirror; they do not

need further admonishment directed at how they should live their lives. The old written code has been internalized—a disciple is under grace, which doesn't abolish the laws of God but imparts Jesus' righteousness to the disciple. This grace, or righteousness is outside the disciple. It can be removed, and will be removed when the fullness of iniquity arrives. Spiritual Israel will then be liberated from bondage to sin as the physical nation was from bondage to Pharaoh. Disciples will be empowered by the Holy Spirit; they will reign over their flesh. They will no longer have need for Christ's righteousness, but will be able to walk blameless by faith as Abraham did. And the unpardonable sin will be the Church returning to Egypt, to Sin, the spiritual king of the South (as Death is the spiritual king of the North, or Assyria).

The above needs well understood: the Son of Man will be revealed (Luke 17:26–30) when spiritual Israel is liberated from bondage to sin at the second Passover. All firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God will die in one day. This will be about a third of both humanity and the greater Church. Human governments will be toppled as will spiritual municipalities—the great horn of the spiritual king of Greece will suddenly be broken. Four horns shall arise from this stub. These four horns are the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, their attributes described through their appearances. And the fourth horseman is Death, into whose hand another fourth of humanity has been given. Then another third of humanity will be killed in the sixth Trumpet plague 1335 days before Christ returns to restore all things. The math is compelling: a third of humanity will be left alive, exactly the number Zechariah prophesies (Zech 13:8). And these are the days referenced by Jesus when He said that if these days were not shortened, no flesh would be saved alive (Matt 24:22).

For the greater Christian Church, the Tribulation will be grim. The seven years of the Tribulation are represented in the plan of God by the Days of Unleavened Bread, the seven days when Israel lives without sin. The Passover begins these days. In the spring high Sabbath calendar, the second high day at the conclusion of Unleavened Bread represents the glorification of the saints, with the Feast of Weeks representing when the majority of humanity receives the Holy Spirit and judgment. The details of the early barley harvest are in the spring calendar. The details of the maincrop wheat harvest are in the fall calendar. Both calendars together represent the entirety of the plan of God; both calendars singularly represent the entirety of the plan of God. All of humanity will appear before God in one of the three holy days seasons (Deu 16:16). Jesus has already appeared during the Days of Unleavened Bread; He appeared without sin. The firstfruits represented by the barley harvest will appear during the Feast of Weeks; two loaves, both baked with leaven. These two loaves are the lives [*psuche*] slain for the word of God, who will be given white robes of righteousness, and the saints who are changed at Christ's coming, who have walked blameless before God by faith rather than through perfection.

However, the greater Church, even when liberated from bondage to sin, will not attempt to walk blameless before God. They will commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by denying that they can walk blameless by faith. They will believe the ten witnesses that say obedience to God is too large a giant to defeat; they will not believe the two witnesses, represented by Joshua and Caleb. They will rebel against God 2300 days before Christ returns to restore all things. This is the great falling away when the man of perdition is revealed (2 Thess 2:3). And God will send a delusion over the Church that prevents the Church from repenting (*vv.* 11–12). The entirety of Christendom except for those fellowships represented by Joshua and Caleb will be lost, and will go until the lake of fire, such will be the effectiveness of the teachers of lawlessness. It is no wonder that Jesus will deny knowing them regardless of the mighty works they did in His name.

Returning to the concept of oneness: since heaven is a timeless dimension, whatever is must exist in unity with what will be and what has been. Change is thereby restricted to what will coexist with what is, which makes finding iniquity or lawlessness in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:15) a

matter of utmost concern. This necessity for coexistence also allows understanding of the temptation of Eve: self-determination of what is good and what is evil places a being, angel or human, in potential opposition to God. As long as the being agrees with God that a *thing* is good, no opposition appears or surfaces. But when the being disagrees, this disagreement manifests itself as opposition or iniquity. Thus, those humans who are one with God will obey as respectful children obey their parents. Evil is nothing more than determining for oneself what is good; so obeying the laws of God because the person thinks that doing so has merit is evil, and the basis of the ultimate paradox. Saints obey the laws of God because they are the laws of God, not because saints think these laws define what is good. Freewill is limited to choosing life through obedience or death through disobedience; freewill doesn't include determining good or evil.

In the context of recovering what is lost, Jesus told mocking Pharisees that if a person will not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will the person be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. The Pharisees did not keep the law Moses gave them. Instead, they kept their traditions (Mark 7:8), which actually negated the laws of God (v. 13). In addition, Jesus told His disciples that if their righteousness didn't exceed that of the Pharisees, they would not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:20). The Pharisees had the law or commandment of God, which was neither far from them, nor too difficult for them to keep. So they knew what was required by the law, and they could have walked blameless by faith before God as Abraham so walked. But they were hypocrites (Matt chptr 23). They required that all of the holy nation keep their traditions rather than the law Moses gave Israel—and this is a point that is neglected, or ignored by the spiritual holy nation of Israel. The Pharisees were not the ultimate law-keepers. They were, instead, the ultimate lawbreakers. They used Moses to cover their murders and thefts. In this, they foreshadowed the greater Christian Church that uses Grace to cover its spiritual murders and thievery.

What has been lost is knowledge that Jesus said His kingdom was not of this world, that Christians are drawn out of the world, that they are not to love the world. To set one's mind on the things of the flesh or of the world is death. The person whose mind is set on these things is hostile to God. This person does not submit to the laws of God (Rom 8:7). And this person is the one most concerned about the decay of society and the trampling underfoot of long-held social mores.

In the sixth year of the captivity, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, Ezekiel had the hand of the Lord fall upon him while he sat in his house with the elders of Judah before him. Part of what he saw in vision was the Lord say to the man [angel] clothed in white linen, "Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it" (Ezek 9:4). Those Israelites who were not marked by this man in white linen were to be killed, beginning at the sanctuary that only the priests could enter. The killing began in the temple, for the temple was defiled, and from its defilement, the whole land was polluted.

Today, disciples are the temple of God. Jerusalem is the holy city of the Church. And Israel is the spiritual holy nation of God; it is not the circumcised physical nation. So when Ezekiel cried out, "Ah, Lord God! Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?" (Ezek 9:8), God's answer pertains to the endtime Philadelphia Church.

Then [God] said to [Ezekiel], "The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice. For they say, 'The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see.' As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; I will bring their deeds upon their heads." (Ezek 9:9–10)

The spiritual house of Israel [or Samaria] consists of those denomination that teach disciples that Christ is a created being, either in the womb of Mary or before the creation of the universe. The spiritual house of Judah consists of the denominations that have descended from the school at

Alexandria; they are denominations that assign personhood to the Breath of God. And these two spiritual houses have fought as the circumcised northern kingdom fought against the southern kingdom following Solomon's death, with the Vandals' sacking of Rome being the last victory by the northern house. However, this northern house is prepared to win the next battle fought that results in mass physical deaths, its primary weapon will be the home storage of foodstuffs.

The land or mental topography of spiritual Israel is filled with the blood of the spiritual infants slaughtered by their parents, the teachers of lawlessness who label living within the laws of God as *legalism*. And it is these teachers of lawlessness who pray the loudest to God about not forsaking the world. They seem to believe that God doesn't see what is occurring in the world; they don't see themselves as murderers and spiritual adulterers. They don't cry aloud about the abominations committed in the sanctuary, or in the temple of God. They cry aloud about the evil of those who are the sons of disobedience, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air. They cry aloud about the lawlessness of the world, whose beast-like ignorance of the laws of God is its natural covering for its sin (Rom 5:13). Rather, they should cry and groan before God about the lawlessness of the Church, in which denominationalism prohibits oneness.

Let the Church first remove its beam of lawlessness from its eye before it seeks to remove the splinter of gay marriage from the eye of the world. Gay marriage is an abomination to God, but not one that surprises Him. Permitting the fellowship of couples who live together without the commitment of marriage defiles the greater Church as the man living with his stepmother defiled the church at Corinth.

Today, the Philadelphia Church cries and groans about the abominations committed in spiritual Israel and in Jerusalem. It is Israel's lawlessness that will be revealed to be exceedingly sinful when the Church is liberated from spiritual bondage.

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