



**PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE WEST INDIES
INTERNATIONAL**

POSITION PAPER ON

***HOMOSEXUALITY, SAME SEX MARRIAGE
AND RELATED PRACTICES (LGBTQ)***

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When God created man in his image along with a woman with an element taken from the man, he formed the ideal couple to fulfil the divine will; they were to multiply, govern the earth and portray his image (Genesis 2:21-22). Accordingly, for PAWI, marriage between one man and one woman is a creational norm designed to reflect the image of God and establish proper human government. The Bible makes a clear distinction between the male and the female who are appropriately created to be physically complementary in sexual and marital relationships. A man is expected to cleave to his ‘wife’, a term which signified woman from the beginning. However in the spirit of Christian love, this Fellowship is prepared to work with others with opposing beliefs to bring about change and conformity to the principles which we espouse.

The Biblical Position

From the outset God’s word condemned homosexuality in dismissive language. Leviticus indicates that it is detestable for a person to lie with another of the same sex making it clear that both homosexuality and lesbianism incurred divine displeasure and were considered sin; and since these practices are obviously part and parcel of same sex marriage, they also stand condemned as sinful (Leviticus 18:22;20:13). It is to be noted also that judgement on such practices were not confined to the Jews since Gentile peoples also perished as a consequence. In addition, Paul writing to the Corinthians lists “abusers of themselves with mankind” among persons who shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). Most Bible commentaries regard this lifestyle as homosexual.

Prohibition against homosexuality and lesbianism, as it is for murder, is for all people for all time, as Dr. Michael Brown, acclaimed specialist on this subject argues. In his considered view the Bible explicitly presents and presupposes heterosexuality as the divinely ordered norm (2004). In providing the first man Adam with an appropriate spouse and life companion, God decided on a woman thereby setting the universal pattern. Since God made humans male and female (Genesis 1:27-28), bisexual relations are a rebellion against his authority and the transgender intervention is a brazen interference with God’s creation.

Homosexual behaviour and same sex marriage are contrary to the goal of procreation which is a prime purpose of marriage; and any effort to pervert the principle of man-and-woman sexual relationship, by whatever route violates the law of God and has negative implications for population development in human society. We stand by the Genesis teaching which underpins God’s plan for the healthy survival of the human race (Genesis 1: 27-28). Jesus himself regarded marriage as a bond between a man and a woman and this was obviously the common understanding of his contemporary audience (Mathew 19:5). This lends historical and biblical support to the stand that PAWI has taken.

Biblical Marriage, Fundamental to Civilized Society

Traditional marriage between male and female has been supported by ancient societies and has become a fundamental institution of civilized living and stable societies. It was, as we have observed, enshrined in Jewish law and accepted in the Christian era. The Bible clearly articulates the deliberate distinction between the man and the woman and its appropriateness for marriage and population growth.

Homosexuality and same sex marriage are a dangerous error on moral and ethical grounds and are a threat to societies which, underpinned by divine ordinances and biblical teaching, have survived for centuries. This assessment applies equally to the cluster of unbiblical beliefs and practices generally captioned LGBTQ. They are all diametrically opposed to the law of God.

Beyond its sacredness, marriage between a man and a woman contains a mystical element for the born again believer. It is significant that our Lord uses the union between the man and his female spouse to typify his own unique covenant relationship with his Church who is described as the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:15-33). This is a reflection of how seriously and sacredly Jesus regarded the established mode of marriage; it is covenantal and inviolable. Therefore this Fellowship cannot countenance the blatant transgression of God's law and purpose which same sex marriage represents.

Same Sex Marriage is Unnatural

Homosexuality and the entire LGBTQ gamut of activities are biologically unnatural; and so consequently is same sex marriage. The latter obliterates the difference as well as the contrasting roles and functions in sexual relationships and in nurturing which is linked with procreation. Nurture and child rearing entail gender -specific roles of a man and a woman. Indeed dismantling the marriage pattern of man and woman only, will destabilize the family unit and subvert its proper place in parenting and transmitting approved social and spiritual values to oncoming generations. Mutual romantic feelings between persons of the same sex should not be used to justify the violation of a divine order that has served humankind well throughout history. A heterosexual rather than a homosexual or lesbian relationship is required.

According to Paul, women have a "natural use" in the marriage bond and the marriage bed and God rejected those who replaced this with unnatural practices whether it was buggery, bestiality or homosexuality. Same sex marriage is an infringement against both moral and natural law (Romans 1:28). And some suggest that homosexual conduct was very likely included among the "detestable sins" which led to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah (Ezekiel 16:50). The claim that the incidence of certain sexual diseases such as HIV Aids is higher among homosexuals and those who engage in deviant sexual behaviour is instructive, and supports the case against same sex marriage.

Conclusion: Attitude to Same Sex Couples

Based on the evidence of scripture and social history, it is our Fellowship's position that same sex marriage is contrary to God's divine will and purpose and a transgression of the social order which he has established. It is the belief of this Fellowship that same sex marriage together with homosexuality and related practices will ultimately attract divine judgement. We see it as a culmination of the kind of spiritual and social decadence that has in the past led to the blight and collapse of powerful nations and civilizations, and is now threatening contemporary society including its demographic foundation.

Consequently the Pentecostal Assemblies of the West Indies applauds and stands in solidarity with organizations and individuals in the Christian and religious community who reject the position adopted by the United States Supreme Court on same sex marriage in June 2015. In our view the authority of a political head, however powerful, and the stroke of a judge's pen cannot invalidate the precepts of the word of God which remain the basis of our faith and conduct.

PAWI believes, however, that same sex couples can be sincere, even if misguided; and consequently we extend to them our love and concern in Christ, and pledge to work and pray towards their transformation and rehabilitation as we do for other transgressors. Indeed we recognize that there can be Christians who are struggling with same sex issues and attractions; and our prayerful admonition is that they pursue holy living with God's help, rather than yield to forbidden practices. Finally though, in the matter of same sex marriage and the range of cognate practices designated LGBTQ, PAWI chooses to obey the law of God rather than the edicts of man.

Reference

Brown, D. (2014) *Can you be Gay and Christian? Responding to Questions about Homosexuality*, Hyderabad, Frontline Publishers.



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