



Redefinition of Marriage

Adapted from "Taking Your Family to the Next Level" series by Scott Erickson

Changing the definition of marriage does not change what God has said marriage should be. Just because someone faces west and calls the sun on the horizon a 'sunrise' does not change what it is. A sunset is a sunset no matter what it is called. As a father or a future father, it is our responsibility to teach our children about what the Bible declares about marriage.

Reporter Sharon Otterman says: "Deciding who is a parent in New York used to be a relatively simple matter. A parent was either biologically related to the child or had legally adopted the child. But in State Supreme Court, the first custody case is underway to test a newly expanded definition of parentage, as handed down by the state's highest court in August."

Now when you have an expanded definition of parenthood, we need to note from what it is expanded. Otterman reports that a parent previously was identified as either biologically related to a child or the one who had legally adopted the child. Now there's very good reason why these two criteria have been throughout so much of human history recognized as the criteria of parenthood. The legal question of parenthood comes down to who has responsibility for this child. That is not an abstract question. And when it comes to understanding the family from a biblical perspective, well, both of these means of becoming a parent are honored and validated in Scripture. The parent is either the one who is a parent by means of biology or by means of legally recognized or culturally recognized adoption.

But then, as Otterman reports, there's a new definition of parentage that is now officially the law in New York. It is "aimed at accounting for the complexity of nontraditional families, including same-sex couples."

In all 50 states now, same-sex couples can be legally wed according to action of the US Supreme Court in the 2015 Obergefell decision. And that means that they are also able to adopt. So why is there now the necessity, in the name of nontraditional families, including same-sex families, of adopting an expanded definition of parenting? It's because there are so many that actually in these

"Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible."

nontraditional categories don't even fit the category of a same-sex marriage, because in this case we're not really talking about marriage. That is another indication of the chaos that is set within a culture or a civilization, when the institution of marriage is radically and revolutionarily redefined as it has been in the United States.¹

¹ Albert Mohler, "Redefinition of marriage brings expanded definition of parenthood," The Eagle Post, November 9, 2016, http://www.kentuckynewera.com/ep/opinion/article_cfef1c04-a646-11e6-a6d8-7bc90cd1feba.html (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: How do you define marriage?

C2: How is our culture defining marriage?

C3: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 2:24 (ESV) Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Matthew 19:1–6 (ESV) Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. And large crowds followed him, and he healed them there. And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

- From these verses, what observations do you gather about Biblical marriage?
- What should you say to your children and grandchildren about marriage?

STRENGTH

S1: We are bombarded with culture telling us that homosexuality is normal. Read and answer the following.

Leviticus 18:22 (ESV)

Leviticus 20:13 (ESV)

Romans 1:25–27 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you deduce about homosexuality?

S2: The argument from some is that they cannot help what they do because they feel it is not a choice. Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 6:9–11 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you conclude?

- From these verses, does it appear that sin is or is not a choice? Are people born this way? Explain.

S3: Explain, using the Scriptures, your view of marriage, sexuality, and God's plan for these areas.

ENDURANCE

E1: Homosexual orientation is not different than any other lifestyle that would be considered outside of God's will. Read and answer the following.

Mark 7:21 (ESV)

1 Corinthians 6:11 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are two things you gather about sin?

- Do you think sin is okay because you have a homosexual desire? Explain?

E2: If you study history, you will find out very interesting things about what happens to a nation when it is overcome with homosexuality. Greece and The Holy Roman Empire both had homosexuality as a common thread. Read and answer the following.

Leviticus 18:22 (ESV)

1 Kings 14:24–26 (ESV)

Romans 1:26 (ESV)

- What do you extract from these verses about sin?

Romans 1:32 (ESV)

Isaiah 3:8–11 (ESV)

Proverbs 14:34 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are three attitudes a Christian should possess towards a person like this?

E3: People in this lifestyle need to know Christians love them and God loves them. Read and answer the following.

Mark 10:6–9 (ESV)

- Do you think Christians should be proactive or use silence when teaching their families about this topic? Write out a Biblical plan to use for your family.