

Ten Reasons to be Faithful to the Traditional Christian Witness in the Matters Before Us

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10. Isolation from the Christian community worldwide.

In the wake of the Episcopal Church USA decision to allow local option in regards to same-sex blessing and ordaining of practicing homosexuals, the following churches have expressed varying degrees of broken communion with the ECUSA:

- Roman Catholic
- Orthodox churches (SCOBA)
- Russian Orthodox church
- Southern Baptist
- Coptic Church
- Most Pentecostal expressions
- Most Evangelical expressions

9. Isolation from the worldwide Lutheran community.

As is true in the Anglican communion, the Lutheran churches of the Global South have major problems with a gay-honoring agenda. Quoting from "Dialogue: A Journal of Theology," volume 42, No. 4, an editorial by Niels Henrik Gregersen of Aarhus Universitet:

At the Tenth LWF General assembly at Winnipeg 2003, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Sweden made the proposal that the LWF should initiate a comprehensive LWF study program on homosexuality and explore the possibilities of liturgies for same-sex partnerships. ...this was the one and only issue that really brought the General Assembly to a boiling point. The churches from the South, especially from Africa and Asia, declared that they would simply abandon the General Assembly, if the Swedish proposal was even discussed. As a result, the proposal was kindly withdrawn by the Swedish church.

A gay-honoring agenda from the ELCA will only worsen the charge regularly leveled against the West that we are culturally imperialistic in our disregard for the beliefs, values, and problems of Third World churches who must live and compete in a world without modern healthcare, sanitation, hygiene, income, education, and the like. These churches also must compete in many cases with Islamic teachings and Mormon missionary efforts to win souls for Christ. Countries of the Islamic world have no tolerance for GLBT practices.

8. Damage to American Lutheran institutions and pan-Lutheran efforts.

The LCMS has made it clear that all joint efforts will be compromised if not discontinued if a gay-honoring agenda is adopted. Lutheran Social Service, Thrivent, etc., will lose the last vestiges of being anything other than another secular social agency or insurance company. 87% of the funding for Luther Seminary comes from non-ELCA sources which have indicated they will go away if these changes are made.

The ELCA health care and pension plans for pastors and church workers can also expect problematic impacts as they minister to the unique health problems and the generally compromised health status of gay and lesbian persons in the church.

7. Unhealthy for the community.

A foundational paradigm of public health policy, since the inception of such thinking in civilizations, has been the importance of separating people from their waste products and properly treating and disposing of those waste products. The importance of this paradigm to public health cannot be overstated. Infant mortality, longevity, morbidity, and the quality of life have all been positively impacted by societal pressures for uncontaminated drinking water, clean food, hand washing, sanitation regimens, improved personal hygiene, and proper sewage management and disposal. The negative health effects of ignoring the paradigm to cleanliness are well known and well documented.

The contents of the human lower intestinal tract are particularly dangerous in their pathogenicity. Hepatitis, E colis, salmonellas, shigellas and the like make people sick, are notoriously difficult to treat, and are among the most capable disease organisms known for developing antibiotic resistance. Several strains of Salmonella are particularly dangerous in hospital settings if they gain a foothold and become ubiquitous. People die due to secondary infections from background reservoirs of infection.

Societies have long standing policies of reducing exposure to both quantities of fecal organisms and potential contacts with fecal organisms per se. Institutions and individuals who have deliberately or accidentally contaminated environments with fecal material (E coli scares, unwashed hands, etc.) face severe societal censure for their behaviors which compromise human health.

Given the above described paradigm, homosexual expression is problematic in the area of public health. The plethora of oral-anal and anal-genital behaviors which are common in homosexual expressions (for example, sources from The Advocate to various medical statistics from Kinsey, the CDC, etc. place anal intercourse as an expression of approximately 90% of gay male couples) are a threat to public health. It is illogical for societies to spend billions of dollars regulating clean food and water

or treating and disposing of sewage safely and then turn around and honor behaviors which intimately pollute people's lives with pathogenic material.

6. Unhealthy for individuals.

The following quote is from an RN who has worked in the gay community:

It doesn't take someone trained in medicine to recognize that, as Brian Camenker of the Parent Right's Coalition said on national TV, "A lifetime of anal sex does not do great things for the body." Brian also said, "As troubling as that statement sounds, there is no logical argument against it." Thus, even lay people recognize what should be obvious, especially to those trained in medicine, and who know the basic facts about homosexuality. It seems to me that medical professionals should be more aware and concerned about the consequences of habitually engaging in promiscuous anal intercourse, and other oral-anal practices of active homosexuals.

The risk of anal cancer soars for those engaging in anal intercourse. According to one report, it rises by an astounding 4000%, and doubles again for those who are HIV positive.

Can anyone refute that anal intercourse tears the rectal lining of the receptive partner, regardless of whether a condom is worn, and the subsequent contact with fecal matter leads to a host of diseases?

Diseases to which active homosexuals are vulnerable can be classified as follows:

Classical sexually transmitted diseases (gonorrhea, infections with Chlamydia trachomatis, syphilis, herpes simplex infections, genital warts, pubic lice, scabies); enteric diseases (infections with Shigella species, Campylobacter jejuni, Entamoeba histolytica, Giardia lamblia, ["gay bowel disease"], Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and cytomegalovirus), trauma (related to and/or resulting in fecal incontinence, hemorrhoids, anal fissure, foreign bodies lodged in the rectum, rectosigmoid tears, allergic proctitis, penile edema, chemical sinusitis, inhaled nitrite burns, and sexual assault of the male patient); and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).¹
Can anyone refute that increased morbidity and mortality is an unavoidable result of male-with-male sex – not to mention the increased rates of

¹ W.E. Owen Jr., "Medical Problems of the Homosexual Adolescent," Journal of Adolescent Health Care6, No. 4, July 1985, pp. 278-85.

*alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, suicide and other maladies that so often accompany a homosexual lifestyle?*²

[Quoted from: <http://narth.com/docs/consequences.html>]

See also:

<http://www.cprmd.org>

http://www.afta.net/homosexual_agenda/ha031901.asp

5. Confusion regarding good and evil, sacred and profane.

The following are examples of how advocates wish to change the ELCA “welcome” to all people:

*As Christian people we seek to provide a loving and accepting climate in which persons can move towards acceptance of God’s love for themselves just as they are, and, as a result, toward acceptance of others just as they are. It is this kind of community which we, as the Christian Church seek to become.”*³

*... the Lutheran Youth Organization supports the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of non-celibate individuals in committed relationships of **all sexual orientations**.* [emphasis added]⁴

As a church, do we really want to honor all orientations, to encourage all people as they are? Pedophiles, bestials, sexually promiscuous, non-monogamous, necrophiliac – is anything improper? Where are the historic Christian emphases on repentance and contrition in these statements of welcome?

In 1985, NAMBLA was admitted as a member in New York’s council of Lesbian & Gay Organizations as well as the International Gay Association – now the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). In the mid-1990’s ILGA’s association with NAMBLA and other pedophile groups cost the organization its status as a non-governmental organization in the UN.

ilga’s renewed attempt to gain admittance to the UN was rejected again in April 2002 because the organization “did not document that it had purged pedophile groups such as [NAMBLA].” The Washington Times reports that Ishtiaq H. Anrabi, Pakistani delegate to the UN Economic and Social Council, expressed concern that ilga was continuing to be secretive about

² See O’Leary, Dale, “Recent Studies on Homosexuality and Mental Health,” <http://www.narth.com/docs/recent.html> O’Leary gives a summary of health findings and references for specific studies.

³ The Blessing Group, St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minnesota. Page 14, “A Congregational Approach to OPENNESS.”

⁴ http://www.elca.org/dcm/youth/lyo/PDF/Resolutions_Passed_by_2003_LYO_convention.pdf

*ties with pedophile groups: "For more than a year, the ilga has refused to provide documentation or allow review of its membership list to demonstrate that pedophilia groups have been expelled."*⁵

Is pedophilia merely another orientation to be honored? Can the gay-lesbian community speak clearly to this question?

The Academic Journal of Homosexuality (Vol. 20, No. 1-2, 1990) explored the issue of "Male Intergenerational Intimacy" in a generally approving manner.

The Episcopal advocate of homosexuality, William Countrymen, is quoted as seeing nothing wrong with a little incest, polygamy, pornography, or bestiality.

Considering the ELCA is currently (2003) being served with legal action for failing to identify a pastoral candidate who turned out to be pedophilic, the last thing the ELCA needs is to appear confused about boundaries in the area of sexual expression.

A retreat was held at Holden Village in October 2003 . Quoting from the retreat brochure:

This retreat will be an opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered Christians and friends to gather as a community to explore the connections between our sexual and spiritual lives. Does God look with blessing on our sexual relationships? Is it possible for an erotic, sexual minority person to be in communion with the body of Christ? Is the Divine present in our love-making? What is unique about intimacy in the context of our lives? Anita Hill and John Ballew will lead us in discussion and exploring our own understanding of the connection between the erotic and the divine. It is hoped that each of us will come away with a grace-filled and life-giving understanding of what it means to be both sexual and spiritual beings.

The name of the retreat was "This is my Body, Given for You ..."

I personally could never use that language in any context other than the Sacrament of the Altar.

When a community loses its ability to discern moral from immoral, sacred from common or profane, it is in one sense becoming the very community that was condemned in Ezekiel 16:49-50, where Ezekiel charges Sodom with having become arrogant, inhospitable, self-centered and haughty, and doing detestable things. By denying the "otherness" component of the male-female diad in sexual relationships, homosexual expression is the very epitome of self-centeredness.

⁵ Dailey, Timothy J., Ph.D., "Homosexuality and Child Sexual Abuse," Family Research Council website, <http://www.frc.org/get/is02e3.cfm>

These boundary issues alone are sufficient for this author to reject any accommodation with the gay agenda in our church, based on my own personal experience of the damages done to one of my congregations by an eventually convicted pedophile. There is no compromise here.

4. Violates common sense.

A pair of recurring questions that have haunted this process are “Why this issue now?” and “Why only in North America and Europe?”

An answer I would offer is that this is probably the only time so far in human history and the only place that has sufficient medical technology to enable these questions to be considered. Prior to the discovery of penicillin and other antibiotics roughly 80 years ago, any wound which opened the intestines to the outside world had a high probability of being mortal. Most of the infections listed under reason number 6 above, in the absence of antibiotic therapy, are debilitating, if not deadly.

A friend of mine whose son is employed as a mining engineer in South Africa reported to me that in that country they deny they have an AIDS problem. They simply don't have the resources to deal with the issue in any comprehensive way in a country where they are trying to insure people have access to clean water, healthy food, and shelter. Those who engage in behaviors which compromise their health are on their own. This is a sad state of affairs, but a truthful commentary on the importance of personal responsibility. In the history of mankind, in cultures pagan and Christian, this thinking has been normative and is part of our heritage of “common sense,” or “natural law.”

The common sense or natural law of human society is also evident in the priority placed on heterosexual marriage and family as social institutions. This priority is common sensical in that it has been recognized by cultures pagan and Christian down through history as foundational to those cultures. Even Lenin, who attempted to build a society without the institution of marriage, realized the error of his ways and instituted civil marriage for the sake of good order in his “proletarian utopia.”

The sciences of sociology and anthropology speak to the importance of harnessing the male to the good ordering and care of families; indeed, some interpreters cite male commitment to a female and their children as being the foundational order of civilization.

3. Violates the confessions.

One cannot read Luther's explanations of the 4th and 6th commandments without arriving at a sense of how important traditional marriage is to Christian community. It is also clear from even a cursory reading of Luther's explanations that married life

is concerned with procreation and the right ordering of institutions for the care and nurture of children in the way of the Lord.

Luther's opinion of sex outside of heterosexual marriage is also very clear, as can be seen in the following:

*... for no one has so little love and inclination for chastity as those who under the guise of great sanctity avoid marriage and either indulge in open and shameless fornication or **secretly do even worse -- things too evil to mention**, as unfortunately has been experienced all too often.⁶*
[emphasis mine]

One other "problem" the Lutheran confessions present us with regarding the questions before us is the "honoring of new knowledge" or "new revelation." Most scriptural interpreters, when pressed, will admit a case cannot be built for same-sex marriage based on scripture, absent the verses in John 16 which some believe implies there will be new knowledge and new revelation in the future.⁷ While this may be a place for some to hang their hat – that "the holy spirit" is doing a new thing in this time and place -- Luther specifically rejects this argument in Smalcald 8, Concerning Confession.

In these matters, which concern the spoken, external Word, it must be firmly maintained that God gives no one his Spirit or grace apart from the external Word which goes before. We say this to protect ourselves from the enthusiasts, that is, the "spirits," who boast that they have the Spirit apart from and before contact with the Word. On this basis, they judge, interpret, and twist the Scripture or oral Word according to their pleasure. Muntzer did this, and there are still many doing this today, who set themselves up as shrewd judges between the spirit and the letter without knowing what they say or teach. ... Therefore we should and must insist that God does not want to deal with us human beings, except by means of his external Word and sacrament. Everything that boasts of being from the Spirit apart from such a Word and sacrament is of the devil. For God even desired to appear to Moses first in the burning bush and by means of the spoken word; no prophet -- not even Elijah or Elisha -- received the Spirit outside of or without the Ten Commandments; John the Baptist was not conceived without Gabriel's preceding Word, nor did he leap in his mother's womb without Mary's voice, and St. Peter says: the prophets did not prophesy "by human will" but "by the Holy Spirit," indeed, as "holy people of God."⁸

⁶ The Book of Concord, Kolb and Wengert. Large Catechism, The Sixth Commandment, page 415.

⁷ John 16:5-15

⁸ The Book of Concord, Kolb and Wengert. Smalcald Articles, page 322-323.

2. Violates the Word of God.

The Epitome of the Formula of Concord states:

Concerning the Binding Summary, Rule, and Guiding Principle, according to which all teaching is to be judged and the errors which have arisen are to be explained and decided in Christian fashion.

1. We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone, as it is written, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119[:105]), and Saint Paul: "If... an angel from heaven should proclaim to you something contrary, ... let that one be accursed!" (Gal. 1[:8]).⁹

Where does one begin?

The scriptural view is clear in matters of sexual expression. "Male and female created He them," "the two shall become one flesh" -- these statements are found in Genesis and echoed by Jesus in the Gospels. The same language across time and place. If the witness ended there it would still be quite clear. It doesn't end there.

In Leviticus, Romans, Corinthians, and other places, same-sex expression is treated negatively in the strongest language found in all of Scripture. There are no positive references to same-sex relations found anywhere in Scripture.

The lesbian-gay community is completely correct when they charge the Word of God with being "heterosexist." From Genesis to Revelation, heterosexual metaphors are used to describe the joys of relationship between God and His people, or the unfaithfulness of God's people toward Him. The passages are clear, and the meanings of the various metaphors are also clear.

The various contexts refer to each other and echo each other in language and tone across time and place. Considering the diversity of people, time, place, literature, context, and usage, it is remarkable that Scripture is so consistently positive about faithful, heterosexual expression, and so consistently negative about same-sex expression.

1. GOD IS NOT MOCKED !

Three men were crucified nearly 2000 years ago on a hill outside Jerusalem.

One man was a proudly defiant, unrepentant person who insisted the Christ save himself and the others as they were. He received no reply from Jesus. So much for inclusiveness.

Another man was a humble repentant person, rebuking the first, stating "we are getting what we deserve" and pleading with the Christ, "Jesus remember me when you come into your Kingdom." He alone received the reply from Jesus that is the deepest longing of all of our souls:

⁹ The Book of Concord, Kolb and Wengert. The Epitome of the Formula of Concord, page 486.

“I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Who do we wish to emulate?