

Title: **Re-Defining Marriage**

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The United States Supreme Court justices have been discussing two cases in recent days. One involves Proposition 8, a ballot initiative passed by California voters that recognized only marriage between a man and a woman as valid. Proposition 8 was overturned by a United States District Court judge who ruled that the amendment violated the U.S. Constitution. A panel of judges from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals concurred and the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court who agreed to hear it.

The second case involves the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). This law requires inter-state recognition only for opposite-sex marriages and also denies recognition of same-sex marriages for the purpose of receiving federal benefits such as Social Security survivors' benefits, joint filing of tax returns and insurance benefits for government employees. The Obama administration will not defend DOMA in court even though the administration continues to enforce it.

At this point, it is anyone's guess how the Court will eventually rule on these cases (a ruling is scheduled for June, 2013). What has been interesting is the discussion about the definition of marriage.

For instance, Chief Justice John Roberts said, "When the institution of marriage developed historically, people didn't get around and say let's have this institution, but let's keep out homosexuals. The institution developed to serve purposes that, by their nature, didn't include homosexual couples." Justice Roberts' view of the origin of marriage is apparently similar to that of evolutionists, i.e., marriage is a contractual relationship that gradually developed over time to address social issues between men and women.

The trouble with that view is that it fails to acknowledge the actual origin of marriage. Marriage did not "develop" over man's history; instead the Creator instituted marriage with Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:18-24). Jesus told the Pharisees that "He who made them at the beginning...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'" (Matthew 19:4-5). When He established marriage, God "defined" the relationship; it is a relationship between one man and one woman.

One commentator made the perceptive observation that even the expression "same-sex marriage" is a concession to those who want to fundamentally change the relationship from its traditional form. The expression is itself a contradiction; marriage is a heterosexual relationship by divine definition.

The cultural changes we are witnessing are the direct result of the denial of God's existence and the rejection of His word, the Bible, as a moral standard. If marriage was not established and regulated by God, then there is no reason that it should not be defined by the changing opinions of society. Operating with that belief, there are many who have worked hard to get the American public to accept the practice of homosexuality as normal and natural. Why shouldn't homosexual marriages be legally recognized, if homosexuality is a normal sexual relationship? Such recognition would only be a cultural change, not a change in morality.

However, if marriage can be re-defined to include same-sex couples, why can't polygamy be accepted as well? There are those who would like to see incestuous relationships "normalized." If someone wants to marry his pet, can we re-define marriage to include bestiality?

Where does it stop? The truth is that there is no logical stopping place.