

# Contemporary Culture and Marriage – *Rom 1:18-32*

## *The Glorious Mystery that is Marriage XI*

**Introduction** – Another title to this message could be, “why Christians and all citizens of WA State must reject Referendum 74.” But at the outset, let us be clear, that the point is never to point the fingers at the unbelieving world around us without noticing that the other three fingers are pointing straight back at us (1 Pet 4:17). It also has nothing to do with hating homosexuals or denying that they have certain desires while acting as though heterosexuals do not have any desires that also need to be mortified (Luke 9:23). Homosexuals are welcome to come to the kingdom of God in the same way that all fornicators, all liars, all thieves, all drunkards are welcome to come (1 Cor 6:9-11).

**Foundations** – When it comes to building a society and a culture, God was clear that He created man in His own image, male and female He created them (Gen 1:27). God took from Adam, fashioned Eve for him, and brought her to him to enjoy the covenant of marriage (Gen 2:21-24). Therefore, marriage is a sexual union of one man and one woman protected by covenant vows of faithfulness to one another before God and society. Jesus made clear that this institution was a creation ordinance of God and not subject to the cultural whims of men (Matt 19:4-6). Paul instructs us from the same passage that this institution is a gospel-proclaiming union of Christ to his bride, the church (Eph 5:31-32).

**Nothing “Victorian” Here** – The Bible acknowledges and celebrates that we are sexual beings with intense desires and pleasures to be enjoyed in the marriage bed (Heb 13:4, Prov 5:18-19, Eccles 9:9, Song of Solomon 1-8). Our complaint is not an argument from the position of prudishness. We are not against the gift (and fruit) of sex; we are against the vandalism of the gift (and fruit) of sex.

**Where Rebellion Leads** (Rom 1:18-32) – The wrath of God is being revealed to those who suppress the truth of God and suppress it with unrighteousness (v18). The problem is not that they cannot see this truth which is clearly visible (vv19-20). The two main tenets of this argument are this: They deny God’s existence and they refuse to render thanks to Him (v21). This causes their thoughts to become futile and their hearts to become foolish and darkened (v21). However, they do not see it this way, declaring their wisdom while actually becoming more and more foolish (v22). But man is made to worship and so they veered to more and more degrading forms of idolatry (v23). In His wrath, God gave them over to their lusts and even in doing this, God is blessed forever, Amen (vv24-25). Specifically, God gave them up to their vile passions and at the center of this idol-worshipping vileness, men are particularly given over to that which perverts the image of God in the male/female relationship and the glory of the gospel in the sexual union of a husband and a wife. This is seen in the acts and relationships of homosexual activity (vv26-27). They did not want to retain the knowledge of God and so God let them not retain that knowledge (v28). He allowed them to fill themselves instead with “all unrighteousness,” the sludge of human depravity (vv29-31). Even though they still know that this leads to judgment and death, they encourage others to join with them in that journey (v32).

**Our Nation, Our Culture, Our Path** – Our nation was established by Christians who acknowledged that God had authority over all the earth and that His law was to be the basis for the law of the land (“unalienable rights” from our Creator required laws to protect those gifts, the very basis of our Declaration of Independence). This was not a declaration of independence from God’s law, but from lawlessness with an appeal to a higher court than human authorities ever hold.

**Today** – Without going through a long history lesson of how we got from there to where we are today, consider where we are and who we are today. We are a nation that for multiple generations has taught our children in government schools that God is irrelevant in the study of all subjects. We teach subjects with a presupposition that Christianity is a myth. That has led not only to the ability to embrace evolutionism and secular humanism, not just atheism, but actual anti-theism which holds to two main tenets: God does not exist and we hate Him (or any of the vestiges of Him). Sound familiar?

**Sexual Rebellion** – What we must see is that God has been giving us over to our idolatry and lusts. Rebelling against the “natural use” of marriage (Rom 1:26) is the expected outcome of rebelling against the triune God. This is not simply a physiological issue, but it is that (the parts don’t fit). We have already rebelled against the natural fruit of this use (our holocaust of abortion, now simply a choice to be discarded), and it has led to the no-fault divorce clauses, high divorce rates, epidemic use of porn, and now the full court press for homosexual marriage. This is not a warning that God will judge us in the future (although He will) for our sexual rebellion. Our sexual rebellion is the very judgment of God upon us.

**Why is the Church So Impotent?** – Sin. We tickle itching ears with our entertainment centers rather than lead the people in reverent covenant renewal worship. We uphold the sovereignty of man in his own salvation. We ordain women and homosexuals to the office of pastor/elder. We refuse to teach men to gladly take the masculine role of sacrificial responsibility in our homes. We allow fathers to abdicate in these roles and then wonder why everyone hates their heavenly Father. And we teach Christians that Christ has no Lordship in Olympia or Washington DC. We are the idolaters first.

Yes, Referendum 74 must be rejected. *But that is not the answer.* What we must plead with God for is a true, Spirit-wrought, national repentance and nationwide reformation and revival of the church.