

The Oyster

“.....clumping together to preserve the shoreline”



June 2015

Defining Marriage

By David Trounce

In the last couple of weeks Ireland became the first country in the world to redefine marriage so as to include same sex couples.

In Australia this has led to a public call for the same thing to happen here on the basis of equality.

But as one young man said to me this week, “The issue is really about approval and recognition.”

Marriage carries with it a great deal of social approval. It is the heavy weight of social relationships and, alongside child bearing, our most celebrated social event.

The problem that same sex couples face is that the definition of marriage does not include their relationships.

As Irish gay activist Paddy Manning pointed out last week, “A gay relationship is simply a different thing to a marriage.

Marriage is, at its heart, about children, and providing those children with their biological parents. Recognising difference is not discrimination.”

Marriage exists to fulfil the responsibilities that come with procreation.



Those who *in principle* are able to procreate (one being male, the other female) marry to fulfil the responsibilities of caring for what they have created. This doesn't mean that every couple has to procreate, but they marry because *in principle* the possibility exists. It is this possibility from a social point of view that gave rise to the institution of marriage in the first place.

The solution being offered therefore is a change in the definition. But what would the new definition be?

Would love be the definition? If so, what would stop a man in Florida (true story) from marrying his laptop, or a man in love with a man and a woman from choosing to marry both?

Some want to redefine marriage, yet still restrict it to only two people. But why?

Once we've cast off the natural boundaries of marriage we have no justifiable reason for any restrictions, and once we have taken out the brakes, we should not be surprised by the resultant crash and pile up of ruined lives that follows.

Living side by side in a Strange World

But seek the peace of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.
(Jeremiah 29:7)

One of the issues that comes up when people choose a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and attitudes of their neighbours is “how then can we live together in relative peace, given our vastly different views of the world?”

In the current debate over marriage, the issue of living peacefully side by side is very much at the heart of the matter. But is it possible?



My Facebook account is littered right now with calls to change the definition of marriage. The posts, memes and one liners are getting a 'like' here and there. If I put forward a reason why I think it's probably not a good idea, will I suffer censure? Will I be accused of being a hater, or will I be thanked for my contribution? From which direction will that hate come?

Both sides recognise that in order to have a free society, there needs to be freedom for both sides to live within the law while retaining their freedom to act and speak according to their own conscience.

In order to avoid anarchy, it has to cut both ways. Bill and Ben want freedom to choose each other without reprisals. The cake decorator wants the same freedom to choose her customers when asked to make them a cake. Penny and Jenny want the freedom to hold a party that celebrates their union without prejudice. The Christian wedding photographer would also like to be afforded an equal freedom and respectfully decline the invitation to photograph the event.

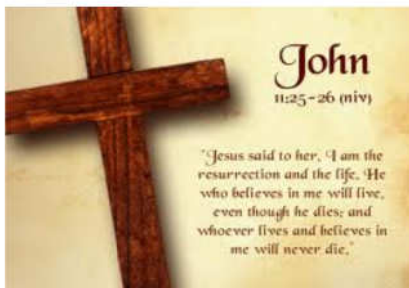
Whatever the outcome, let's hope that both sides live up to that standard of freedom, and that we don't end up where the US has ended up – that place where coercion now reigns, where the local florist can be sued for quietly declining an offer to make a buck from two guys who wanted flowers for their wedding.

Is this wishful thinking? Yes. All societies are ultimately theocracies. That is, all societies have an ultimate, singular standard of authority derived from a single source – let's call it a 'god' – and when all is said and done, that god, like all gods, will require total allegiance. For those whose God is the God of the Bible, this means seeking the peace of our town as far as it is possible for us to do so. But seeking that peace is not the same thing as attending the parade.

News and Events

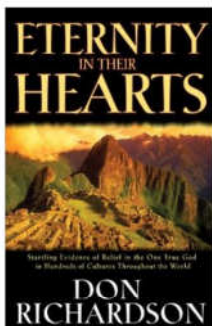
**Join us for Church on Sunday...
Go on.**

9am Corner of Tanilba Ave & Peace Parade,
Tanilba Bay. **ALL WELCOME**



Eternity in their Hearts

Has the God who prepared the gospel for all the peoples of the world also prepared all peoples for the gospel?



In this book using compelling stories from many different cultures Don Richardson shows how the concept of a supreme God has existed for centuries in hundreds of cultures throughout the world. Who were the Magi who brought gifts to the Baby Jesus, and how did they know that a Messiah was coming?

Who was Melchizedek, the contemporary of Abraham, a priest of the one high God? Who were the Greek prophets whom Paul recognized as having spoken God's words to the Greek people? How did China, Myanmar, India and an ancient Inca King before ever having contact with Christian missionaries recognise that there was only one true God? 'Eternity in Their Hearts' answers that question.

The thesis of the book is simple: God is the One God of all the earth.

He has made Himself known to all people throughout time that they might be prepared to receive Him when He came into the world as the Man, Jesus Christ.

What's on This Month

Women's Get Together

The local get together for women is next on Friday, June 5th and July 3rd, at 7pm, Tanilba CRC Church.

Call Gail on 4984 5442

Men's Breakfast

Meets on the first Saturday of the month at Henderson Park in Lemon Tree Passage, next on Sat. June 6th and July 4th 7.30am

For more Information call David on 4984 5442

Pete's Kitchen

Pete's kitchen is on every Thursday in school term time at 6pm at the Baptist Church, Beatty Bvde, Tanilba Bay. Come along and enjoy a meal among friends and neighbours.

About our Church Community...

Tanilba CRC is a Community Church that began on the Peninsula over 50 years ago. We believe in the Bible. We believe that Life is a Gift and we believe that God has created us to know Him and to live for Him in true family and community through His Son, Jesus.



If you would like to find out more about our Church's activities on the Tilligerry Peninsula, we invite you to contact us or attend one of our Regular Activities for more information.

Wednesday Prayer Meeting

At the church. 7pm in school term time. All Welcome.

Social Groups

Make New Friends.

Soup Nights, Kite Flying, Cricket, BBQ'S, Day Trips, Family Games and more.

Join one of our Social Community Groups in Lemon Tree Passage or Tanilba Bay.

These Groups are open to all and meet in February, May, August and November each year.

Men's Breakfast

Come join other local men in our Community for a Hot Breakfast on the 1st Saturday of each month, Feb. to Dec.

All are welcome and we meet at 7.30am at Henderson Park, Lemon Tree Passage.

Women's Social Group

This group is open to all women and meets on the first Friday each month in the church hall, Cnr Peace Pde and Tanilba Ave, Tanilba Bay.

Come share a meal and a conversation on a Friday Night.

Weekly Bible Study Group

Our Ladies' Bible Study Group meets at Mallabula on Fridays at 10am in school term.

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Christian Reformed Church

02 4984 5442

Corner of Tanilba Ave and Peace Parade, Tanilba Bay. NSW.

Church Service: 9am Sunday

www.tanilbacrc.org.au