

the presbyterian banner

November 2016

*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities —
his eternal power and divine nature —
have been clearly seen,
being understood from what has been made,
so that men are without excuse.
Romans 1:20*

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Editorial

It is hard not to notice the way language has become twisted and even turned right around in our age. Words which in the past clearly meant a certain thing are now openly used to represent the very opposite. Thus a word meaning being joyful or happy becomes an iconic word for the most desolate lifestyle. In fact, in common 'street talk' that word now means 'sad'. Then there is the use of an object which represents God's grace and beauty in creation being used as a symbolism for a decidedly ungodly lifestyle (which God calls an abomination in Leviticus 18:22-25).

This particularly struck me when I heard a minister use the word 'gay' instead of 'homosexual.' While his theology was quite clearly biblical, it shows the extent of how the cultural marxists have kidnapped the English language and trapped us into following their lead. And don't they hold it to ransom!

This is why using the term 'homosexual' makes it clear what the deed actually is, just as the word 'sodomite' makes it plain what the practice of this ideology involves. Then throw in the clear health risks, the transient nature of most of those relationships, and all the other negative side-effects that go alongside, and see how clearly our community is being fooled into believing the Emperor has the finest of clothes!

Mind you, the mainstream media are adding even more to this cauldron. We are suddenly being pointed to all kind of homosexual relationships in the world of nature around us – lesbian gorillas and who knows what else! There is the over-wrought emotional face of the child born biologically a boy, but who wants so much to be a girl. Well, what can you do but condemn the child to a lifetime of gender-reassignment medication, surgery and decades of anguish and regret? Look out for quite a bit of work for litigation lawyers in the future.

Just imagine if you could go back fifty years and have the opportunity to speak with one of your grandparents, or somebody else of that generation. What would be their reaction if you were to describe what life had become like in 2016? It all goes to prove that our society has been sucked down a moral vortex. And just as you think it cannot get much worse, there is worse! It is only God who can intervene to turn things around. He can turn around hearts and lives, as we ourselves can testify!

For the present, however, let's remember the true meaning of these words. Look at the rainbow as an example. Instead of letting these distorters capture and mangle its beauty with their false interpretation, make sure our children know its significance as a sign of God's covenantal promise with mankind and 'all the beasts of the earth' as given in Genesis 9:8-17.

*Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man,
I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.
The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly,
along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

1 Timothy 1:13-14

Photo Credit: Cover: Alex Steel; page 5, Tom Audet

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‘The Lord Has Chosen Zion’

Psalm 132

This is a psalm which I hope will grow on you. It appears at first sight a bit daunting and difficult.

But I hope that after you get to grips with it, you'll agree with me that it's a great psalm. It's about a faithful God who keeps His promises. It's a royal psalm that leads us ultimately to see Jesus the Anointed of God.

You'll notice its length. The average length of these psalms of ascents is six verses. This psalm however has 18 verses: three times the average. Why? Perhaps it's an indication of its importance.

We don't know the date or the author of the psalm. It may have been David who wrote it in celebration of the day when he brought the ark of the Lord back to Zion (2 Sam. 6). It may have been Solomon – or some other – who wrote it for use at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8). It may have been Ezra or Nehemiah who composed it for the rededication of the second temple in the days after the return from exile. The fact is: we just don't know the author – and it doesn't really matter. It's an inspired song that speaks of Christ.

It's a very appropriate psalm of ascents. It's all about Jerusalem, Zion, David and his hopes and vision of the future. Imagine the pilgrims standing in Jerusalem admiring the city and the magnificent Temple. They are reminded of the driving force of the man behind it. They recall the trouble and effort that David expended to see it built. That's what the first part of the psalm is all about.

Then in the second part of the psalm, the pilgrims look forward to the blessings which God promised David. The psalm is in two equal halves. It's also 'bifocal'

A Song of Ascents

Psalm 132

A Song of Ascents

¹ *LORD, remember David
And all his afflictions;*
² *How he swore to the LORD,
And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:*
³ *“Surely I will not go into the chamber of my
house,
Or go up to the comfort of my bed;
⁴ I will not give sleep to my eyes
Or slumber to my eyelids,
⁵ Until I find a place for the LORD,
A dwelling place for the Mighty One of
Jacob.”*
⁶ *Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah;
We found it in the fields of the woods.*
⁷ *Let us go into His tabernacle;
Let us worship at His footstool.*
⁸ *Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place,
You and the ark of Your strength.*
⁹ *Let Your priests be clothed with righteous-
ness,
And let Your saints shout for joy.*
¹⁰ *For Your servant David's sake,
Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed.*
¹¹ *The LORD has sworn in truth to David;
He will not turn from it:
“I will set upon your throne the fruit of your
body.
¹² If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I shall teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne for-
evermore.”*
¹³ *For the LORD has chosen Zion;
He has desired it for His dwelling place:*
¹⁴ *“This is My resting place forever;
Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.*
¹⁵ *I will abundantly bless her provision;
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
¹⁶ I will also clothe her priests with salvation,
And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*
¹⁷ *There I will make the horn of David grow;
I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed.*
¹⁸ *His enemies I will clothe with shame,
But upon Himself His crown shall flourish.”*

as it focuses on things that are close up and things that are far away.

George D. Ball

Alec Motyer comments, “The psalm ‘hangs’ on three verses referring to David: verse 1 prays that the Lord will credit to David's account all the trouble he has taken; verse 10 asks that – again for David's sake – the Lord will favour His anointed king; and finally in verses 17-18 the Lord responds that He intends to establish a strong, anointed monarchy ‘for David’, victorious and flourishing.”

This psalm is a meditation on 2 Samuel 7: 1-17. It recounts David's desire to build a house for the Lord and the Lord's amazing response: ‘The Lord Himself shall establish a house for you’ (2 Sam. 7: 11).

1. In Praise of David's Desire and Devotion (1-10)

The opening five verses give credit to David for being the man who wanted to build a house for the Lord. David at this time was well established in Jerusalem. The military situation was stable (2 Sam. 7: 1). There was peace. But something bothered him. He was living in a mansion – a luxurious cedar panelled house – while God dwelt in a mere tent (2 Sam. 7: 2). It didn't seem right. He felt guilty and ashamed. He determined therefore to do something about it. The psalm tells us that the matter occupied his mind 24/7. He says, ‘I will not enter my house or go to my bed, I will allow no sleep to my eyes, no slumber to my eyelids, till I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob’ (verses 2-5). Allowing for poetic licence, David was nonetheless consumed by the idea of building a house for the Lord.

Even so, the Lord subsequently told David that he was not the man to build it. He was a man of

war, so how could a man of war build a house of peace? (1 Chron. 22: 7-8). Nonetheless, his desire was noble and highly commendable. He had gone to great pains to prepare for the building of the temple. He had set aside 100,000 talents of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone, and many skilled workmen (1 Chron. 22:14-15).

What's the lesson? It's not condemning us necessarily for living in comfortable houses. But if we do, we should exercise the same level of care maintaining the Lord's meeting house and supporting His work. That's what the people in Haggai's day failed to do. But David was a man consumed by the Lord's business. He spent every waking hour thinking and planning what he could do for the Lord. What about you? How much of your time and thoughts are spent thinking, 'What (more) can I do for the Lord?'

Verses 6-8 give credit to David for being the man who brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (You can read about it in 2 Sam. 6: 1-15). Remember how the Ark had been captured by the Philistines back in the days of Eli? It proved, however, a 'hot potato' for the Philistines to handle. Many fell ill with tumours and died (1 Sam. 5: 6). Their fish god, Dagon, kept falling over and injuring himself. So the Philistines decided to get rid of the Ark and returned it to Israel on a cart pulled by two cows. It eventually ended up in the house of Abinadab in Kiriath Jearim. There it remained for 20 years – all during the reign of Saul. The Ark was therefore 'abandoned' by Israel for many years.

David, however, had never forgotten about the Ark. He had first heard about it in Ephrathah – that is Bethlehem (6). We can only presume that it was part of the instruction he received when he was a lad in the family home of his father Jesse. Now in the days of his kingship, the Ark was found in 'the fields of Jaar' (which is Kiriath

Jearim: see 1 Chron. 13: 5). He resolved to bring it to Jerusalem. After one failed attempt (remember the Uzzah tragedy: 2 Sam. 6: 6-7), after three months he tried again. This time they followed the Lord's instructions. There was great rejoicing as it approached the city (2 Sam. 6: 12ff). David knew how important it was to have the Ark there. It was His dwelling place, the place of His presence (5, 7). It was His footstool; though His throne is in heaven His feet are on earth (7). It was the Ark of His Might (8). It was the place of reconciliation and forgiveness, which is why it was called the Ark of the Covenant.

David wanted the Lord to be at the centre of the nations worship. He wanted the priests to be what they were meant to be – clothed in justice; and he wanted the people of God to do what they should do -- rejoice in the Lord (8-9). 'Both priests and people were to be united in worship and to reflect the saving righteousness of God' (Harman). Therein lies a lesson and a challenge.

2. In Praise of God's Promise to David (11-18)

Just as David made an oath to the God of Jacob, so the Lord made an even greater oath to David (verses 11-12). You can read it in 2 Sam. 7: 12-16. It's a remarkable promise. Dale Ralph Davis instructs us that that promise to David would not be annulled by death. The Lord said, 'When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever' (2 Sam. 7: 12-13). Nor would it be destroyed by sin. 'When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him' (2 Sam. 7: 14-15). Nor would it be exhausted by time, 'And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your

throne shall be established forever' (2 Sam. 7: 16).

David had successors: he had a dynasty. There was a 'house' of David that lasted for about 400 years, until 587 BC when it ended with the exile, because of death, sin and failure. Had God therefore failed to keep His oath? The answer is in the New Testament. The angel Gabriel said to Mary concerning the child she was expecting, 'He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there shall be no end' (Luke 1: 32 - 33). Peter told the people at Pentecost about the resurrection of Jesus. He said David, 'being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne...foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ' (Acts 2: 30-31). God therefore kept His oath and was building for David a 'house' far bigger and better than he could ever have imagined.

'For the Lord has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his dwelling place: This is my resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it' (13-14). Forever? How do we explain that? He no longer dwells in Jerusalem. Has he broken his oath? The answer is again found in the New Testament. 'But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant' (Hebrews 12: 22-24). Where is Zion now? It's where Christ is – at the heart of His redeemed people. The earthly Jerusalem was only a temporary Zion; it was a type or picture of

the heavenly Zion. There in Zion God has promised that He will provide for the needs of His people and will also clothe her priests with salvation and her saints shall ever sing with joy' (15-16).

The psalm closes on a high note (17-18). It mentions a horn, a lamp, and a crown. These are symbols of strength, clarity and royal dignity. God's promised King – His Anointed One – the Messiah – will have strength; His crown will shine; He

will triumph over His enemies and He will reign forever. The psalm is therefore being fulfilled in Christ. He is the fulfilment of David's desire; and the Lord has kept His oath to David. God is a faithful God who keeps His promises. 'All the promises of God find their Yes in him' (2 Cor. 1: 19).

Prayer:

Loving Father, you have on oath promised us a Saviour, Jesus Christ, your Son. We thank you that He delights to be in the midst of His people and has promised that He will abide with us until the consummation of the world. Bless us in all we seek to do for you and fill us with your joy. May you direct and keep us in peace, through the same Jesus Christ. Amen.

Oh Really?

I Gamble Responsibly

To be responsible means to be answerable to another for something. The word 'responsible' indicates that some one is response-able, able to respond to a set of rules or values. Therefore, to gamble responsibly is a meaningless exhortation if it is not contextualized, if it is not connected to a particular plumb line of morality or to a higher authority. For example, we are also exhorted to drive responsibly, that is we are to drive in response to the traffic rules set before us and which we are to obey. For gambling, no such benchmark is being provided by those who tell us to gamble responsibly. What is being provided is sponsorship through casinos to come to the aid of those who gamble irresponsibly (whatever that means, since the same absolute plumb line is still absent, wherefore the measure of irresponsibility is reduced to a purely subjective opinion). What we do know is that gambling stands firmly planted, firstly, as a passionate national pastime and secondly, as a pastime which causes much grief to families, since gambling opportunities are prone to lead to devastating and addictive social circumstances for both the gambler and those affected by his (or her) passion. Statistics can be found on the internet to bear this out in super-abundance.

What The Bible Says

The Christian would say that the Bible probably has the answer. However, upon scrutinizing Scripture no

clear prohibition of gambling is being found. There is no dictum that declares, "Thou shalt not gamble," or words to such effect. The following treatise will try to show from Scripture that, from the viewpoint of Scriptural ethics, much can be said to condemn this national pastime.



Gambling is essentially playing a game of chance for stakes. Each player places at risk something of material value *without the guarantee of fair recompense*. Some people will retort that 'all of life is a gamble.' Such people, however, confuse 'risk' with 'gambling'. There are many risky occasions, but they do not – and that is the crucial difference – involve taking other people's property without compensation (e.g. as in the risk of driving a car or flying in a plane). Some argue that running a farm or a business is gambling. Again however, no agreement is entered to take other people's goods without compensation. Others again say that investing in stock is gambling. Not so, because what is stock really? Is it not effectively resulting

in becoming part owner of a business? Further, when stock is sold, both seller and purchaser agree on a price. Neither is insurance a form of gambling, as some people may suggest, because money is laid out and a product is acquired. In short, none of the above is about gambling, since no party aims to create a situation in which uncompensated losses occur. But gamblers always want financial loss to occur, because all parties involved (yes, on both sides of the table) hope to profit from those losses.

It may help to look at the etymology, the origin, of the word 'to gamble'. It comes from the old English word 'gamenian', which means 'to play, to jest, be merry', all with the connotational loading of frivolous pursuit, which means 'following after something which is inappropriately silly'. When considering gambling in such a realm, it becomes quite evident that it is an activity upon which our Lord frowns for His people, as not fitting man's cultural mandate, which is entirely about responsible (by God's plumb line) stewardship of and on God's real estate. John Calvin comments on the idolatrous practice to which the Israelites resorted, as recorded in Exodus 32:6 and reiterated by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, verses 6 and 7, quoted here: *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after*

evil things as they also lusted. And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND ROSE UP TO PLAY." Says John Calvin, "Moses here designates the sacred banquet and sports engaged in, in honor of the idols; for, as we have seen elsewhere, the faithful feasted before God at their sacrifices, and so also heathen nations celebrated sacred feasts, whilst they worshipped their idols in games.

Of this point Paul is the surest interpreter, who quotes this passage in condemnation of the idolatry of the ancient people, and ably accommodates it to the purpose he had in hand; for the Corinthians had not gone to such an excess as to bow their knees to idols, but were **boon-companions of unbelievers in their polluted sacrifices**. Hence feasting and play were two appendages of idolatry. For it was customary, both among the people of Israel and among the rotaries of superstition, to have a feast in connection with a sacrifice, as a part of divine worship, at which no profane or unclean persons were allowed to be present. The Gentiles, in addition to this, appointed sacred games in honor of their idols, in conformity with which the Israelites doubtless on that occasion worshipped their calf, **for such is the presumption of the human mind, that it ascribes to God whatever pleases itself.**"

In support, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown declare, "As the Israelites sat down (a deliberate act), ate, and drank at the idol feast to the calves in Horeb, so the Corinthians were in danger of idolatry by a like act." Calvin well understands how the human mind works and how people are past masters at justifying their actions – even to the point that they manage to ennoble their actions to levels of piety, or at least to a level where they proclaim 'that God is okay with this.'

The warning of one minister is worth noting at this point, where he

said, "For man to get into trouble and into destructive modes of operation, all that God has to do is nothing." Indeed, a fair amount of money spent on gamenian (I want you to continue to remember the origin of the practice under study) is allocated to help problem gamblers to overcome their addiction, as people fall prey to the lure of the illusionary pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

Activities which do fit the bill of 'gamenian', gambling, are casino activities, lotteries, raffles (even if they are for 'a good cause' – in which case people could of course just give a donation, but that would remove the thrill), charity and church bingo games.

Wherever There's Chance Biblical Principles Are Being Violated

No matter how small the amount, certain Biblical principles are still being violated, as will be demonstrated in what follows. It must be noted that, whereas gambling is not addressed directly in the Bible, yet Biblical principles are set forth **which legitimize the passing of either money or possession from one person to another.**

The person desirous to follow Biblical guidelines for life will therefore do what God commands and understand that what God has not commanded is therefore forbidden. In other words, when God lays down the economy for honest dealings, deviation from this economy lands one automatically in the quagmire of unethical meanderings (as the havoc in society confirms with sickening regularity). It is true, the Bible does not forbid gambling directly, but good and necessary *inference* is a well-established practice of Biblical analysis, one which Jesus uses on many occasions and which He expected His followers to apply, for instance when speaking in parables.

The three dictates of God in this matter involve work ethic, trading, and giving. Let us briefly consider these three approaches that come from the Lord of the universe Him-



self.

1 Timothy 5:18 informs us that a labourer is worthy of his wages. Ephesians 4:28 declares: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The Biblical work ethic involves effort on the part of the worker in return for reward. Gamenian, gambling, undermines the Christian work ethic because it aims at taking from others what they, those others, have earned. Some may argue that a gambler does actually work. So does a thief. Neither of the two produces anything that benefits the other party, however. If gambling were really Biblical, then the gambler should receive wages, because he works to win. It runs counter to Biblical work ethic, because it leads people to seek profit *at the expense* of others. If a thief were really working as per Biblical ethics, he ought to receive just recompense in monetary or material value from those he robs.

Trading is also an economically just practice. In Genesis 23:1-18 Abraham bought a field and a cave for money. There are other examples of purchasing items in the Bible (e.g. Solomon buying material from Hiram for the building of the Temple – 1 Kings 5:10-11). Trading is an approved Biblical practice therefore.

Giving goods or money to an-

other person voluntarily as an act of love or compassion is urgently recommended in the Bible (cf. Ephesians 4:8; Acts 20:35). Gambling is not about giving voluntarily, as an act of love, or as an act of compassion. The Biblical paradigm in terms of parting with goods or money without recompense could not stand in starker contrast to gambling. Giving freely to those in need is a small way of following in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus, Who gave all for those in need.

These are the three ways in which God authorizes people to part with goods or money. Gambling does not fit any of these. The category in which gambling fits is under the heading of covetousness and greed. This is authoritatively condemned in the Scriptures (cf. Romans 1:29-32).

Is the practice of gambling fitting for godly stewardship of what the Lord of the earth has entrusted to mankind? A gambler is an unfaithful steward who wastes his Mas-

ter's money.

Prov.13:11: Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.

"Every young man would do well to remember that all successful business stands on the foundation of morality." Henry Ward Beecher (prominent clergyman and social reformer, 1813-1887).

The World in the Banner

This is How the Homosexual Activists "Debate" – And This is How Democracy Dies

When Mark Steyn was last in Australia I of course paid close attention to what he had to say and took copious notes. One thing I recorded that especially stood out was this thought: "The Left does not want to win the debate, it wants to shut down the debate." That is as accurate as you can get. And I know this from firsthand experience. I have been to numerous public meetings on topics such as marriage and family either as a speaker or a listener which the radical leftists and the homosexual activists sought to shut down, disrupt, and/or turn into mayhem.

I have more than once even had to run the gauntlet, and be personally escorted into a venue by a line of police who had to keep the raging and hate-filled militants away from us. I have personally experienced being jostled and shoved by the angry activists, had things thrown at me, and abused me with all manner of foul and despicable language – all because I dared to think differently than what their agenda allows.

Democracy and freedom of speech obviously mean nothing to these leftists. They insist on their way or the highway. They do not seek debate and dialogue – they seek domination and despotism. And the irony of all this should not be lost on any of us:

-The group that shouts the most about tolerance is the least tolerant.

-The group that shouts the most about love is the least loving.

-The group that shouts the most about acceptance is the least accepting.

-The group that shouts the most about diversity is the least diverse.

-The group that shouts the most about inclusion is the least inclusive.

-The group that shouts the most about bigotry is the most bigoted.

-The group that shouts the most about hate is the most hateful.

Consider just the most recent appalling example of this. A meeting I and some others have been invited to to discuss marriage and family has had to be cancelled and relocated. Why? Because the tolerance brigade again has shown its true colours. Here is how one news report has covered this:

A ferocious campaign against Christian groups planning to meet on same-sex marriage has forced them to cancel the event at a major hotel next week, amid claims of physical threats from marriage-equality advocates.

The Accor Hotels group confirmed late yesterday that the function had been abandoned after a social media storm triggered phone calls that "rattled" employees and left the company concerned about the safety of staff and guests.

In the first test of the "civil" debate promised for a plebiscite on gay marriage, advocates for the "yes" case were being blamed last night for the kind of "hate speech" that Bill

Shorten and others have claimed would come from the "no" case. A spokeswoman for the Mercure Sydney Airport Hotel said the campaign by marriage-equality advocates had forced the company to close the hotel's Facebook page, sparked phone calls that disturbed hotel staff and escalated the problem to the company's headquarters. "We've conducted an objective review regarding the safety and security of our hotel guests and staff," she said. "Following this review the event will no longer take place next week."

The four Christian groups booked the hotel conference room for Tuesday to prepare for a "no" campaign in the potential plebiscite, even though Labor and the Greens appear certain to block the "people's vote" legislation in the Senate. About 100 people were expected to attend from the Sydney Anglicans, Sydney Catholics, the Marriage Alliance and the Australian Christian Lobby.

Gay news website Same-Same.com.au alerted readers to the event. Activist Pauline Pantsdown urged followers to stop the "dangerous, predatory" ACL. "Are children safe at Mercure and Accor hotels?" one post said. One follower declared it "utterly horrifying" that Accor would host the Christian groups while another accused the hotel of supporting the "hateful, deceitful and extreme" ACL.

Sadly the hotel chain caved in to the nasty threats of the activists. That of course will simply embolden the militants to keep this up in the future. They know that if they simply make their ugly, militant threats loud enough they can close down debate whenever and wherever it seeks to take place. That my friends is how democracies perish. That is how we crush freedom. That is how the police state emerges.

Before the back down by the hotel it was bombarded by the militants with nasty anti-democracy attacks. Activist Pauline Pantsdown put it this way: "It's time to call out the ACL for the dangerous fringe group that they are. Racist groups don't get to hold events in reputable hotels, and neither should the ACL."

And after the cancelation the homosexual militants were ecstatic knowing they had once again managed to trash democracy and trample on freedom of speech. Trans activist Stephanie McCarthy gloated: "Perhaps the ACL could relocate to the Sydney Airport departure lounge where they can fly off to Texas where they belong."

Feel the lurve. On the other side, a few comments from those greatly concerned about marriage, children and society are worth offering here. Columnist Miranda Devine said, "Vicious, violent and intolerant. Proof, if you needed it, that the bigotry comes from same sex marriage activists."

And ACL boss Lyle Shelton stated, "If this is what happens to Australians who support marriage now, what will it be like if the law ever does change?" Yes, quite right. We see the jackboots of rainbow tyranny clearly on display all the time here in Australia, and sham homosexual marriage has not even been legalised yet.

Just imagine how bad things will get when it does. But we don't have to imagine – we already know perfectly well how bad things can get. In my 2014 book *Dangerous Relations* I documented around 170 cases of people losing their jobs, being fined, and even jailed for daring to disagree with the homosexual agenda and their attempt to destroy

marriage by redefining it.

If the activists can smash democracy and stifle freedom of assembly and freedom of speech so easily now, you had better be prepared for the real oppression of Big Brother coercive utopianism when it comes following any change to the Marriage Act.

You have been warned.
+ Bill Muehlenberg, *CultureWatch*

Commercial printer acts as censor; bans book against same-sex 'marriage'

Today is the release date for a much-anticipated book by Dr David van Gend, President of the Australian Marriage Forum. The book is titled *Stealing from a Child: the Injustice of 'Marriage Equality*, and has sold over two thousand copies prior to its release. The cover says the book "lays bare the subversive 'genderless agenda' that comes with genderless 'marriage'. It is a manifesto in defence of society's inviolable foundation: Father, Mother, Child". The first in a series of launches in all state capitals begins tonight in Brisbane.

Yesterday the publisher, Connor Court, was notified by the printer, McPherson's, in writing: "*Due to the subject matter and content of your book, unfortunately I have been instructed by senior management not to proceed with printing this title.*"

McPherson's is a printing company in Maryborough, Victoria, and is now owned by OpusGroup, headquartered in Sydney. McPherson's has had a ten year relationship with Connor Court, publishing many volumes including controversial books such as Ian Plimer's best-seller, *Heaven and Earth*, and Cory Bernardi's *Conservative Revolution*. Never before has the publisher known a printer to refuse to print a book on political grounds.

"This was a shock, because you don't expect a printing firm to act as a political censor for the gay lobby", Dr van Gend said today. "It is also a shock because it comes just days after the Mercure International Hotel in Sydney cancelled the venue for our big gathering of groups opposing same-sex 'marriage', after gay activists threatened hotel staff if

they let us meet there. We had to find a different venue in Sydney at short notice, and we will have to find a different printer at short notice – but we will not be silenced. "I defy anyone to find a single word in my book that should not be printed. I can understand the gay lobby being worried about a book that so clearly exposes the harms of genderless 'marriage' and of the whole genderless package deal that comes with it, but they should not try to shut down our side of the debate by banning a book!"

"We have been through this censorship already, with our TV Ad last year for the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras banned at the last minute by SBS -- but that led to widespread condemnation of SBS, and I hope this act of political censorship by a corporation gets the condemnation it deserves. We are meant to be an open society where great issues are debated freely. What's the difference between burning books and banning them being printed?"

"I can only say to people, read the book and try to find anything that could justify this printing company acting as a branch of the Thought Police. Only today a Member of Parliament messaged me and said, "I couldn't put the book down. It's a clarion call to the complacent – a wonderfully kind but persuasive read."

When asked if this action by the printing company would affect the upcoming book tour, Dr van Gend said it would not. "The strong early demand for books meant we had to run off a few thousand interim copies digitally at a different company and we will be able to supply demand for at least the next week, until we find a new offset-printer."

The national book tour starts in Brisbane today, and goes to all state capitals before ending in Canberra on Monday 10th October, the day Parliament is expected to resume debate on the marriage plebiscite.

+ *Australian Marriage Forum Media Release, 23 September, 2016*

Loneliness on the rise in Australia: Lifeline

Most Australians are feeling lonely despite being better connected than ever before thanks to the internet and social media. Almost two-thirds of Australians say they often feel lonely, with four out of five people believing loneliness in society is on the rise, a survey by Lifeline found.

But despite their loneliness, Aussies aren't seeking available support. About 70 per cent of the 3100 survey respondents said they had never contacted the charity or a similar crisis service before.

Lifeline chief executive Pete Shmigel says 55 per cent of the charity's crisis callers live alone, but a large number of survey recipients who said they frequently feel lonely live with a partner and/or children.

This highlights the fact that many people feel unable or are unwilling to seek help from their loved ones, he said.

"For a society that is more technologically connected than we have ever been, these results suggest we're overlooking good old-fashioned care and compassion when it comes to our mental health and wellbeing," he said. Only 53 per cent of respondents said they had someone to confide in when they feel lonely.

"We as a community need to be more mindful of how the people in our lives are coping, and send a strong message that no person in crisis should have to be alone – help is available," Mr Shmigel said.

He said the survey provided a timely look at the social factors that influence mental wellbeing, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics set to release new suicide data on Wednesday.

+www.news.com.au

Suicide rates highest in a decade

The number of Australians taking their own lives has hit a 10-year high, while dementia is tipped to overtake heart disease as the nation's leading cause of death within five years. The number of suicide deaths climbed above 3000 in 2015 for the first time, rising more than

five per cent in 12 months, official figures show.

Suicide was the leading cause of death for 15-44 year olds, with males three times more likely than females to take their own lives. Suicide rates were highest in the Northern Territory, while Queensland recorded the greatest increase in deaths. The Australian Bureau of Statistics found that while suicide accounted for less than two per cent of overall deaths in Australia in 2015, it claimed the lives of a third of those aged 15-24 and more than a quarter of 25-34 year olds.

Mental health groups were dismayed by the rising rates and called for a new national approach to suicide prevention. Chairman of Beyondblue, Jeff Kennett, said the Senate should set up a special commission to combat suicide, while Lifeline wants a national summit. 'These figures have to stop us in our tracks,' Mr Kennett said.

'The 2015 total is two-and-a-half times the national road toll and six times the number of Australian lives lost in the entire Vietnam War.'

Sane Australia chief executive Jack Heath said while much had been done to reduce the stigma around mild and moderate mental health issues, more help was needed among the 700,000 Australians with more complex conditions. 'There needs to be access to better quality services and that particularly becomes an issue for people in rural and regional areas where there are a quarter of the psychiatrists and half the psychologists,' he told AAP.

'And we need to do a better job to help people who are discharged from emergency departments after suicide attempts by making sure there's better follow-up services.' While deaths from suicide are rising, heart disease remains the main cause of death for most Australians with more than 19,700 fatalities last year.

www.skynews.com.au

Archaeologists find toilet referenced in Old Testament

Israeli archeologists have discovered a stone toilet while excavating

a Jewish shrine at an ancient city gate, they said this week, in evidence a biblical king tried to stamp out worship there. King Hezekiah deliberately defiled the eighth century BC shrine at the door to the ancient city of Lachish, as part of a campaign to centralise Jewish ritual in Jerusalem, the Israel Antiquities Authority said.

"A toilet was installed in the holy of holies as the ultimate desecration of that place," the IAA said in a statement. "A stone fashioned in the shape of a chair with a hole in its centre was found in the corner of the room."

The authority said it was the first time an archeological find confirmed the practice of installing a toilet to discourage worship, which is referred to in the biblical Book of Kings in an account of King Jehu's fight against worshippers of the pagan deity Baal. "And they demolished the pillar of Baal, and demolished the house of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day," the statement quoted the Bible as saying.

But laboratory tests suggest the stone toilet at the Lachish gate was never used, the IAA said. This showed its placement was "symbolic, after which the holy of holies was sealed until the site was destroyed".

Lachish, about 40 kilometres southwest of Jerusalem, was conquered by the invading Assyrians under King Sennacherib in 701 BC. The city gate was first located "decades ago", the IAA said, but was only fully exposed in early 2016. "The excavation revealed destruction layers in the wake of the defeat, including arrowheads and sling stones, indicative of the hand-to-hand combat that occurred in the city's gatehouse," it said.

+ www.9news.com.au/

Life under the Banner

Loveliness

Have you ever watched the sun rise over the ocean? The loveliness of such a sight needs to be experienced to be appreciated. They say a picture is worth 1000 words. Seeing the sun rise over the ocean, actually experiencing it firsthand in real life, this is worth more than 1000 pictures.

Think back to when you've experienced beauty so lovely, that it stirred your heart to wonder. Remembering that loveliness, you can almost taste what it was like when you first experienced it.

Philippians 4:8 tells us to meditate on whatever things are lovely. Is this verse telling us to contemplate those times when we've experienced loveliness, remembering how our hearts have been elevated by beauty?

Well, that can be part of it. But what Paul tells us to do in Philippians 4:8 is more than just about bringing to mind pleasant visual experiences. There's something much deeper going on here.

True Loveliness

The Greek word translated here as 'lovely' is talking about something that lends itself toward love. It's pleasing, it's lovely, because it stirs up a sense of love.

So it's not just about reflecting on things that look nice. Rather, it's about contemplating that which lends itself toward the positive moral quality of love.

In this sense, something could be visually pleasing, but if it does not promote biblical love, it is not truly lovely. Loveliness in this sense goes beyond the surface appearance.

To illustrate this, consider pornography. You have a woman who is very beautiful by worldly standards. But remove her clothing, force her into seductive poses, photograph her, violate her by turning her into an object of lust, then her picture is not at all lovely in the sense that Philippians 4:8 is talking

about.

But put her clothes back on, get her out of that destructive lifestyle, work towards forgiveness and restoration, and get to love her as a sister in Christ: that's when she can truly become lovely in a much deeper sense.

Looking at it this way, think back to the idea of watching the sun rise over the ocean. You could have a Christian and non-Christian side-by-side experiencing the beauty of that scene. They can both have an appreciation for the visual feast before their eyes. But the Christian will have a deeper sense of the loveliness of what he is seeing.

For him, it's more than just an experience of the senses. Rather, the beauty before him stirs in him a rich love for the God who made all things, who set the stars and the planets on their courses, whose providential care keeps the sun burning.

The Christian knows his heavenly Father loves him, and he loves his heavenly Father. And that makes the beauty of the sun rising on the ocean that much more lovely.

Loveliness and Love

Let's connect all of this to 1 Peter 4:8 – "And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins."

We are to have a fervent love for one another. Well, thinking about that which is lovely in other people can certainly increase the fervency of our love.

Meditating on that which is lovely in our brothers and sisters in Christ, focusing on the beauty of Christ in them, focusing on how God works in and through them, should help us to love them more and more, right?

So, we are to have a fervent love for one another, and we are helped in this by meditating on that which is lovely in others.

That means we should avoid thinking about that which is not so lovely about them, right? If we truly

Jim Klazinga

love them, we will close our eyes to those ways in which their thinking and actions are not consistent with what God tells us in His Word. We will sweep all such matters under the rug. Out of sight, out of mind.

Isn't this what 1 Peter 4:8 tells us to do? Have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins. Love will allow us to put those sins out of our minds and not think about them.

Well, not exactly.

For sure, there will be times when love means simply ignoring those weaknesses and imperfections in others that annoy us. Love will mean that we don't respond to every single slight. Love keeps no record of wrongs. Love doesn't constantly record in a personal diary every single instance where another person hasn't acted perfectly, keeping a running tally.

But say you took this to an extreme. Say, for instance, you had a husband who commits adultery numerous times, and in addition, he regularly beats his wife. Does the wife's love for her husband mean that she has to ignore what he does? Does the wife's love for her husband mean that there don't have to be any consequences for his wickedness? Just sweep it all under the rug, because after all, we love each other? Absolutely not.

The Loveliness of Covered Sin

We have to understand what is meant by love covering a multitude of sins. It's not about sweeping those sins under a rug, covering those sins so that they are no longer visible.

Nor is the idea here that we are able to ignore minor sins, but the major ones that can't be swept under the carpet still need to be dealt with. "Multitude of sins" is not saying, okay, there are lots of sins that can be dealt with by ig-

noring them, but there are going to be a few sins that can't be a part of that multitude. They can't be covered, so they must be dealt with. That's a misunderstanding of what 1 Peter 4:8 is saying.

Listen to the words of Psalm 32:1-2 – "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity." Plus, Psalm 85:2-3, "You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; you have covered all their sin. You have taken away all Your wrath; You have turned from the fierceness of Your anger."

Covering sin is not about putting it out of sight, like you cover a gift with wrapping paper. No, covering sin is about dealing with that sin properly.

Say you've talked about something over and over. When the matter comes up again, you say, "we've covered that." We've dealt with it. It's behind us. It doesn't need to be brought up again.

Love covering a sin means that love deals with that sin. And yes, sometimes sin can be dealt with by ignoring it. Sometimes the best thing to do is to simply let a matter drop. A person says something rather insensitive, and you know it's not worth getting into a big argument about it.

But that's not always going to be the way you should deal with sin. Sometimes dealing with sin means confronting it head on, letting the person know that what he or she has done is not acceptable, letting them know that what they have done requires repentance. And you do this out of love, not because of how that person's actions affected you, but because you are concerned for them. You don't want them to continue walking down a destructive path. You know that what they are doing is only going to hurt them in the long run. So you deal with that sin by helping them to see their need for forgiveness, their need to turn away from that sin, and their need to walk down a better path.

What makes it easier to do is meditating on what is lovely in that person. You know that that person is a child of God, whom God has

loved and called. You know that, when it comes right down to it, God is continuing to work out his purpose in the life of this person that you love.

Meditating on what is lovely in that person is not about saying that this person can do whatever he or she feels like, that you're going to support him no matter what he does, right or wrong. It's not about saying that you will defend every sinful behaviour, you will come up with any sort of excuse to justify every wicked action.

Rather, meditating about what is lovely in that person is about seeing Christ in that person, and wanting that person to reflect Christ more and more. It's about wanting to work together to help one another shine the light of Christ more and more.

In that sense, meditating on what is lovely, and loving one another fervently as a result: that's when sin can be covered, dealt with. That's the context in which there can indeed be forgiveness and moving forward together in love.

The Loveliness of Ultimate Forgiveness

Of course, in all of this we have to remember that the most important forgiveness we need is forgiveness from God. We know that we need him to cover our sins, turn his wrath away from us, turn the fierceness of his just anger away from us, forgiving our iniquities. And we know that he has done this in Christ. We know that because Christ took the fierceness of God's anger upon himself on the cross, because he bore the consequences for our iniquity. Because of this, we can be forgiven. We are forgiven. God has dealt with our sins. God has covered them with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

And having this forgiveness, we can then go on to be forgiving in our lives. We pray, "forgive us our trespasses, just as we are fully determined to forgive the trespasses of others against us." We want sin to be covered, dealt with.

Having major sin swept under the carpet, having it be a festering sore that never gets dealt with, having it be a divisive obstacle that gets in the

way of our relationships, is not true love. And that is not how sin gets covered.

But by dealing with sin, working together to overcome sin, working together to fight against sin, fleeing from sin and pursuing that which is good, we know that there can be forgiveness. We know that with true repentance, sin can be dealt with.

There may continue to be long-term consequences for previous sin. A pastor who runs away with a woman who is not his wife can't expect that forgiveness will mean that he can jump on the pulpit and start preaching right away again.

But there can be restoration where brothers and sisters move forward together in love, and long to strengthen one another in the mutual battle against sin.

Think about how lovely this is. Think about how moving forward together in love points to the loveliness of Jesus Christ. That's where true beauty can be found.

You know, if we could say that all of us were perfect, and none of us have committed sins that need forgiving, where would the loveliness of Christ be? Where would we be able to find his beauty? How would we truly be able to focus on the majesty and wonder of our gracious heavenly Father?

But knowing that we are sinners saved by grace proves his true loveliness. And it wouldn't ultimately matter what we have done in our past, because the beauty of Christ will shine much more brightly, dispelling the darkness of who we've been.

My friends, meditate on what is lovely. Have fervent love for your brothers and sisters in Christ. Have the kind of love that covers a multitude of sins, a forgiving love that wants sin to be dealt with, so that we can move forward together as those who rejoice together in the love and mercy of our forgiving heavenly Father. Know his love, know he has covered all of your sins, and he has forgiven every one of them, because he has loved you fervently.

Children under the Banner — Luke 15:11-32



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Prescribed Search Work

NOVEMBER 2016

Senior Section 12 years and over; Intermediate 10—11 years; Junior 9 years and under

SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE (Intermediate omit questions 4 and 8)

1 JOHN chapter 3

1. What will we be like when Christ shall appear [is revealed]?
2. For what purpose was the Son of God manifested?
3. What is the mark of having passed from death to life?
- x4. In what way should we love, instead of loving only in word and tongue?
5. What is the condition of our receiving whatever we ask?

chapter 4

6. Complete the verse: "Herein [In this] is love, not that we loved..."
7. What is the state of one who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God?
- x8. Which comes first: Our love to God, or God's love to us?

JUNIOR

2 KINGS 4:8--37

1. What did the woman of Shunem suggest to her husband they should make for the man of God?
2. What did Elijah tell the Shunammite would happen to her 'about this season' [this time next year]?
3. What happened when Gehazi laid the staff on the dead child's face?
4. What did Elisha do to bring the child back to life? (2 verses)

Please send the answers to:
Mrs I Steel
PO Box 942
Epping NSW 1710
The questions for the whole year
are available from the above postal
address or by email at:
iesteel@gmail.com

Synodical Treasurer's Report

Synodical Treasurer's Report for Third Quarter of 2016

"As at 30/9/16 the balances of the main *Working Funds* of the church Synod were:

\$ 26,126 - Missions General
(25,836) - Missionary Support (TI Leggott/AIM)

\$ 290 – Combined balances
=====

\$206,172 – Missions Relief (Equities Account)
\$ (5,484) - Missions Relief (Working Account)
\$ 11,911 - Stipend Relief
\$178,596 - Training of Ministry
\$ 9,571 - Youth & Fellowship
\$ 58,229 - Synod General Fund

The main area of need is *Missionary Support (TI Leggott AIM)* which is currently overdrawn \$25,836. Payment of annual Synod donations to missions etc. have not yet been made. This will result in the net balance of Missions (General/TIL-AIM) funds being overdrawn \$710 as at 30/9/16. Increased financial support for Rev TI Leggott is needed.

"Let your works of charity to men be accompanied with prayer and thanksgiving unto God. Render thanks unto God, that he has put you among the givers, and not among the receivers, it being a more blessed thing to give than to receive ." - Thomas Gouge.

2017 PCEA Family Camp

3 – 6 January, Elanora Conference Centre, Elanora Heights, NSW

The Rev Graeme Hart (RPCA, McKinnon, Melbourne) is our speaker

His theme is: What Genesis Teaches Us Today

Within this theme he will cover subject such as:

What Genesis teaches us about creation; What Genesis teaches us about marriage;
What Genesis teaches us about gender; What Genesis teaches us about the rainbow

Enrolment forms are available at your local church. Otherwise contact Stewart Carswill -
sccarswell@optusnet.com.au

For an idea of what Family Camp is like go to
<https://vimeo.com/119512145>

Books in the Banner

Stealing From A Child: The Injustice of 'Marriage Equality' By David van Gend, Connor Court

This morning I showed my eldest daughter (and journalism major) a copy of David van Gend's new book. "Oh dear", she said, smiling wryly at the provocative title and garish LGBT rainbow cover. I

said, "The printer refused to print this book. They had a contract, and pulled out at the last minute. 'Due to the subject matter and content,' they said." "I'm not surprised," she replied, sadly.

And I was.

There was no outrage. No sense of injustice. No anger that books are slain at the press. No frustration that an entire point of view is squelched at the source.

She didn't agree with the printer, but she accepted their action as normal. The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* rides again in twenty-first century Australia.

But we can thank the printer—the Opus Group—for the far greater interest that this will stir up for *Stealing from a Child*. Just as the old *Index* became a kind of must-read list for free-thinking university students, many more will now want to get hold of “The book they refused to print,” “The book they didn't want me to read.”

The question is, is Dr van Gend's book worthy of such a keen interest?

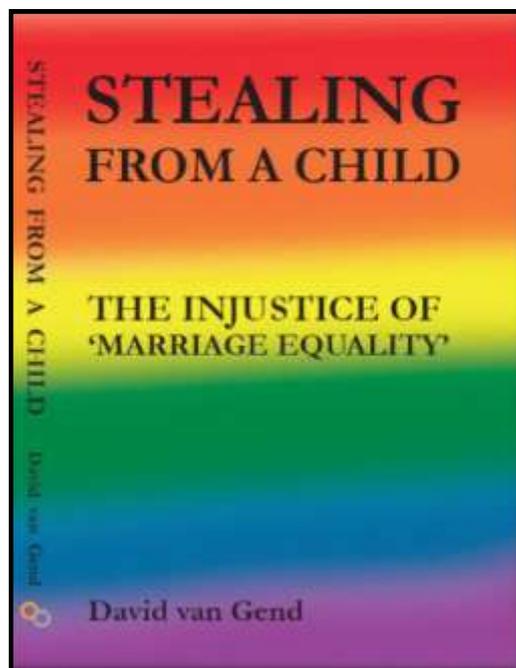
At first, those who are familiar with the literature will find *Stealing* to be a thorough and thoroughly referenced compendium of the main arguments against marriage redefinition. Dr van Gend shows yet again how marriage redefinition institutionalises motherless and fatherless parenting. He denounces the profound injustice of removing children from their parents for the sake of adult aspirations. He explains how marriage redefinition will make the dangerous pseudo-scientific claptrap of “Safe Schools” mandatory; and how it opens a Pandora's Box of other perversions of marriage. We are shown yet again how the new ideology erases the important and beautiful male-female distinction, how it brings our children under state control, and how it calls down stern persecution upon all who dissent.

Anyone who fancies that “the sky will not fall” after marriage redefinition is in for a salutary rude shock.

So *Stealing from a Child* is, at the very least, an outstanding resource for the fight for marriage. But this is no cut-and-paste job. The tested and unanswerable arguments are restated with the freshness and enthusiasm and vigour that we have come to expect from the author. Don't expect a passive read. Prepare instead to be com-

pelled to confront hard evidence, to think hard, and above all to *act*. For the stakes are too high, and we cannot slumber irresponsibly in a warm bed of lazy thought and *laissez faire* inaction while an entire generation is exposed to the catastrophe of marriage and family redefinition.

As Dr van Gend urges again and again: You cannot go on being inanely “nice” while untold harm is inflicted on your neighbours. You cannot go on being the “useful idiots,” gormlessly lying down before the brainwashed fanatics of the sexual revolution.



Stealing is not a literary book, but it is eloquent, and manly in the best sense of the word: strong, courageous, and vigorous in its defence of the weak and vulnerable.

At its heart, Dr van Gend lays bare the cultish nature of “marriage equality.” In a key chapter he likens the movement to ancient Gnosticism: the religion for rich third century Westerners with too much time on their hands, who pursued freedom in a “truth” separated from the true nature of the world we live in. Intriguingly, in his recent scientific dissection of the Safe Schools curriculum, Professor Pat-

rick Parkinson likened the Safe-Schools movement to Scientology, a brand of Gnosticism for rich twenty-first century Westerners with too much time on their hands. Both doctors have lifted the lid on “marriage equality,” and exposed its cultish core.

For like a cult, “marriage equality” has a strict canon of beliefs, built on pseudo-science rather than fact. Like a cult, it takes the hard evidence and scientific rigour that refutes its dogma—that threatens to alarm her devotees—and either ignores it, or derides and dismisses it without reasoned argument. Like a cult, devotees must not question the dogma, and those who do are smeared and banished and ostracised. Like a cult, followers are made to believe that those who oppose the cult are evil. Heretical books must be prosecuted or, better, not even printed.

In return the cult offers its docile followers pleasing rewards: the freedom to do and be whatever one chooses to do and be. But like every cult, the freedom that “marriage equality” promises is a mirage. Reality bites, and the innocent victims, the children and the vulnerable, will suffer the most.

Yes the cover of *Stealing from a Child* is alarming and provocative. And its content—hard and bracing truth delivered with eloquent energy—is even more so.

It will prove more than worthy of whatever interest its censorship will provoke. Buy it, read it, and pass it on.

Reviewed by Campbell Markham, Minister at Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Hobart, Tasmania.

Churches in the Banner

Taree News

As a result of the one or two complaints to the ABC our church sign has shot to prominence. We were never sure if or how many people actually read the sign. Now as a result of media coverage (an interview on ABC radio with Michael Spooner, and coverage on the NBN Channel Nine local news) we know that many people now take note. Vision Christian Radio in Brisbane also picked up the story and did an interview with me on Thursday 15th September. We have had dozens of messages on our sign over the years - nothing gimmicky or 'clever' - just Bible verses or a Biblical truth. However the sign, 'One man + one woman = marriage' provoked some indignation. As a

result of the media coverage I have received many 'hate' messages. I'm glad to say however that the messages of support received have outweighed the nasty ones.

The whole episode has high-



lighted the intense hatred and vitriol that the opponents to traditional marriage harbour. Perhaps

it's a foretaste of what is going to happen in the coming months?

We have had opportunity to explain that we are not pointing the finger at any single minority in our community. There are sins committed by heterosexuals (e.g. pornography, rape, incest, etc) that are as degrading and demeaning as sexual sins committed by homosexuals. The Bible declares that we are all sinners. We all need forgiveness. We all need a Saviour. Christ is the only Saviour. He still delights to save sinners (no matter what their sexual orientation) and change lives for good.

Presbyterian Church sign on same-sex marriage divides regional community of Taree

Signs displayed outside a church in the New South Wales mid-north coast town of Taree are causing a stir, with some arguing they are offensive while others welcome them.

The controversy comes as politicians debate whether to hold a plebiscite on same-sex marriage or vote on the issue in the federal parliament.

Resident Lisa Blogg said the sign "Marriage is one man + one woman" outside the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia in Taree was offensive.

"My daughter is gay and her response to the sign is, 'This is one of the reasons I want to leave this town, because it is oppressive to be a person in a same-sex relationship in a town like this'," Ms Blogg said.

"The sign is on the main thoroughfare where people drive past."

Her partner Chris Thiering said other signs outside the church had also raised eyebrows.

He cited 'Do not be surprised if the world hates you' as another example of an offensive sign.

"If I was having a bad day and trying to deal with my troubles and I walked around the corner, that would have a very negative influence on me," Mr Thiering said.

Messages on signs direct quotes from Bible, pastor says

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia pastor Greg Ball acknowledged the signs could be taken out of context, but said the signs were direct quotes from the Bible.

"I do take to the point they are not referenced, but we are limited to what we can put on the sign as we have a limited number words we can put in," he said.

Mr Ball said 'Do not be surprised if the world hates you' is a direct quote from the Bible (1 John 3:13), and was directed at Christians, telling them not to be scared to be hated because of their religious beliefs.

He said he welcomed the feedback, but there had been very few complaints to the church, and many "statements of appreciation".

Mr Ball also said the statement about marriage would not have been controversial until recently.

"Our view for hundreds and thousands of years would not have been controversial ... we are simply promoting the message of the Bible," he said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-08/marriage-sign-1/7825746>