

THE NONSENSE OF 'GAY MARRIAGE'

"But I will put you a higher case... How if there were an Act of Parliament to say that God should not be God?"

*A Man For All Seasons*¹

The inability to think straight which is the chief characteristic of modern man with his engagement in the twin evils of subjectivism and materialism began with an act of violence towards the institution of marriage.

In Thomas Cranmer Henry Tudor found a bishop prepared to compromise his oath of office by holding that Henry had never been married to his Queen, Catherine of Aragon. Henry inveigled the Commons through fear to endorse this betrayal of principle in an Act of parliament. By this archetype not only did Henry VIII wilfully destroy his own marriage, he destroyed the very integrity of marriage. He did something worse : he showed how human will could be used to dominate the order of nature. Here was—*here is*—the issue that has troubled the world ever since, the assertion of the *voluntary* as superior to the *natural*.²

Some things are within the power of human will ; others are not. A man cannot halt the circulation of the blood in his body : its operation is not determined by human will but by nature. The human body is designed, ordered and directed by a force superior to human will. The parliament of a state cannot pass a law directing that the sun shall not rise or that the tides shall not turn every six hours and expect it to have effect. Such realities are of nature and beyond the power of human will.

Marriage is not an institution of man's invention : it was established (through nature) by God and, though it requires mutual informed consent of a man and a woman, it is not an effect of human will. The individual is free to embrace its structure for the good of mankind and his own good. The state may lay down the terms surrounding its celebration and its recording but marriage does not get its validity from the state. Men and women were marrying long before any state, government or parliament ever existed.

Marriage can never encompass the joining together of homosexuals because marriage is something *of nature* not of human will and homosexual activity is *eo ipso* a perversion of the natural. Any 'law' passed by a parliament, even with the support of a majority of the members of its society, would be utterly ineffectual to render morally good what is morally perverse. Indeed, it would have about as much effect on reality as a law directing the sun not to rise or the tides to cease to flow.

¹ Sir Thomas More to Sir Richard Rich in Act Two of Robert Bolt's play.

² The modern world, bereft of any sound philosophy to guide its actions, has little grasp of what is meant by the natural or the voluntary. The *natural* proceeds from an intrinsic principle without knowledge of end but with knowledge of end presupposed in the author. The *voluntary* proceeds from an intrinsic principle with knowledge of end. The issues are elaborated in the Appendix. Cf. St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 6, art. 2 et ad 1.

Yet, there would be effects within the society, harmful effects, for any law that fails to reflect nature or the moral law operates not as a law (*an ordinance of reason unto the common good*) but as a species of violence.

Divorce, contraception, abortion, and the conception *in vitro* of the human embryo, are each instances of the attempt to substitute for the demands of nature and the moral law, determinations which are beyond the lawful competence of human will.³ The perversion of nature and the moral law these entail is responsible for much of the chaos of modern society. Any law to allow ‘gay marriage’ is a further instance of this syndrome : it is, simply stated, an attempt to legitimise sexual perversion.

The excuse under which the facility is sought is ‘human freedom’. It involves freedom alright, the freedom advocated by the sophists of the French Revolution, absolute freedom to do what one will ; to kill ; to steal ; to commit adultery ; to lie ; to practise any religion *or no religion*. But let no one think it is an exercise of the freedom proper to man, that is, of human freedom, of moral freedom.

Michael Baker
September 21, 2013—*St Matthew, Evangelist*

Appendix

		[either <i>against the inclination of</i> [its subject, when it is—	violent
	[a principle	[
	[<i>extrinsic to</i>	[
	[its subject,	[
	[and then—	[or <i>not against the inclination of</i> [its subject, when it is—	artificial
Something	[
may proceed	[
either from	[[either <i>without knowledge of end,</i> [when it is—	natural
	[or		
	[a principle	[
	[<i>intrinsic to</i>	[or [material knowledge of	
	[its subject,	[with [end only, when it is—	spontaneous
	[and then—	[
		[or <i>formal knowledge of</i> [end, and then it is—	voluntary

³ It is not stealing for a dog to take food from a table for the dog, as a brute animal lacking knowledge of the end of its acts, is not bound by the moral law. But a man is so bound for his nature is such that he chooses freely his ends, whether fitting to his nature and therefore good, or evil.