

Letter Published in the Church of England Newspaper - 17th June 2012

Dear Sir

We were deeply disappointed to read the tirade in last week's Comment against the hopes and aspirations of same-sex couples, and the Prime Minister's support for the depth of love and commitment which is leading more same-sex couples to aspire to marriage and family life.

Our disappointment was not just because of the hyperbole which the writer employed in warning that we have entered Huxley's 'Brave New World'. It was not just because of the character assassination of David Cameron after his 'Damascene conversion to gay marriage'. It was principally because of the crude dismissal of same-sex partnerships as a 'purely subjective sense of friendship' and the disparaging remarks about 'perfectly fertile lesbian women who refuse to use their normal female capacities to have children.'

And we are especially disappointed that the newspaper that was courageous enough last year to publish our article "Towards a theology of gay-marriage?" has now turned away from biblical debate and prayerful reflection to embrace crude stereotypes, insult and misrepresentation.

There is, of course, a fundamental flaw in the sentiments put forward last week.

The fact that there are same-sex couples who want to get married and raise children is deeply problematic for those who fear same-sex relationships. It undermines the argument that these relationships are mere transitory friendships which are promiscuous and unstable. It challenges the stereotype nurtured by some that same-sex partnerships are ultimately destructive, selfish and sinful. If there are same-sex couples who want to take on the vows of marriage, committing themselves to life-long faithfulness and even wanting to raise a family – what is left to condemn in the so-called 'gay lifestyle' ?

The commentator's swipe at 'perfectly fertile lesbian women' contradicts the Christian understanding of love and sex in almost every respect. Is the writer really suggesting that lesbians should go off and have casual sex without love or commitment, be unfaithful to their partner, and abandon their 'natural relations' just to get a baby? Surely not!

The reality is that committed same-sex partnerships are looking more and more like marriage to those of us who are willing to listen objectively (rather than subjectively) to both the Scriptures and the experience of same-sex couples. That recognition is based on a deeper understanding of what makes a Godly marriage, rather than the simplistic assumption that if it contains a man and a woman, it will meet the qualifying requirements of God, no matter what follows.

We hope and pray that the CEN will draw back from the political rhetoric of last week's Comment and re-engage in the prayerful debate which is needed as we seek to listen and respond to real people in real relationships – many of whom desire to live Godly lives in the way of Christ.

Yours sincerely

Rev Benny Hazlehurst
Accepting Evangelicals

This letter was written in response to the Editorial article below:

Editorial – Church of England Newspaper – 10th June 2012

Brave New World

The large majority of voters who supported the Conservative Party at the last general election must be reeling at the cultural and economic mortar bombs being thrown at them by the Coalition and Tory PM who has opted consistently to back LibDem cultural demands of the most radical kind. Mr Cameron, who came to power on the back of being a supporter of marriage and the traditional family, has morphed into a destroyer of both in his frantic efforts to appear politically correct. He loves to use the rhetoric of the cultural left almost to spite his large phalanx of 'common sense' Tory MPs and kick them into submission. The excuse is that 'we are in a coalition', but this now looks more like a pretext than a genuine reason.

This new orientation to a severe left wing cultural policy also means economic hardship for the 'useful idiots' who voted for him, the non-wealthy 'bourgeoisie' – a group that the MacMillanesque Tories rather despise, those awful Grammar school educated grocers' daughters. This sector of society is being taxed till it bleeds for university education and for wind farm taxes on their fuel bills, stealth taxes for ideological purposes. And now Mr Cameron announces his Damascene conversion to 'gay marriage' as a 'conservative' imperative.

This really is meddling with the deep structure of society and goes way beyond what should be done without a clear mandate electorally, and probably a referendum. There is no need for this change, there is no injustice to correct since 'gay' couples can cement their friendship by the civil partnership arrangements and gain nothing from having that called 'marriage'. This proposal is in fact entirely destructive of marriage as it has existed for millennia as the objective covenant bond for a man and a woman to share life in love and raise children. That is an objective fact, embracing biological, sociological and psychological reality. To confuse this with a purely subjective sense of friendship is simply a mistake, but a mistake to alter what marriage truly is.

But the 'Equality Act' floodgates have been opened wide and we are approaching Huxley's Brave New World. The NHS is now abolishing the word 'Dad' lest it offend gays. The NHS is to give free IVF treatment to perfectly fertile lesbian women who refuse to use their normal female capacities to have children. Huxley predicted that physical sex and birth-giving would become disgusting and that reproduction would be by factory genetic production. We are nearly at that point in this

rushing of crazy 'equality' governmental blitzing of our societal deep grammar. And it is far from promoting equality and diversity, it is suppressing both – do 'dads' want to be written out of the NHS script or to stay in, is anyone asking them?

And where is the ethical intellectual contesting of all this destruction, nowhere in the Commons? We surely might expect some high level ethical critique in the Lords – by the bishops, if not, why indeed are they there?