

The Center for Progressive Christianity

## Gay Marriage Not Defeated

By Chris Ayers

The “religious right” is not only celebrating the re-election of George W. Bush, they also are ecstatic about the resounding, coast-to-coast victory of states “banning gay marriage”. Out of fear that gay marriage will harm traditional marriage, on November 2 voters in eleven states approved constitutional amendments limiting state marriage licenses to one man and one woman. The amendments won, often by huge margins, in Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Ohio, Utah and Oregon. The bans won by a 3-to-1 margin in Kentucky and Georgia, 3-to-2 in Ohio, and 6-to-1 in Mississippi. The religious right feels morality won and evil was defeated.

State approved gay marriage with all its benefits may have been defeated in these eleven states, but gay marriage was not defeated. While states have been in the business of issuing marriage licenses for years, marriage, from a Christian perspective, is a matter of faith. It is a sacred act which requires no government approval. Marriage is between God and two people, a matter of a church and its congregants. Gays and lesbians will continue to be married with or without the support of their state governments and churches which recognize that homosexuality is not a sin will continue to celebrate with their homosexual members who decide to get married.

Best I can tell, God has been creating gay and lesbian people for a long time and my guess is that trend will continue in the future. It’s not like gays and lesbians just showed up on the scene. Gays and lesbians are not going away no matter how many states “ban gay marriage” with constitutional amendments and no matter how hard or long conservative Christians pray for homosexuals to be healed. It’s also highly likely gays and lesbians will continue to fall in love and want to get married. No country, no state, no denomination, no church, no preacher can prevent their union.

What the recent election reveals is that the need for the education of Americans on homosexuality has a long way to go, but the education will occur. It may take years or decades or even centuries, but it will occur. It will occur because more and more gays and lesbians are having the courage to come out to their families, friends, co-workers, classmates and people in their church, temple or mosque. It will occur because more and more parents of gays and lesbians will work through the misconception their offspring’s homosexuality is their fault and they will accept their child and spread the truth to others about gays and lesbians. It will occur because more and more Christians will learn to read and interpret the Bible intelligently and will no longer accept the religious right’s false claim that the Bible is infallible and inerrant. It will occur because the world is discovering that gay and lesbian Christians actually are more Christ-like than religious right Christians.

**I am a heterosexual male married to a heterosexual woman. My gay and lesbian Christian friends have in no way threatened my “traditional” marriage. They are not to be feared. Rather, they are to be celebrated. They have blessed my wife and me with their faith and perseverance even in the midst of religious persecution, which always is the worst type of persecution.**

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