

Joint Statement on same-sex marriage proposals

1. Marriage is the voluntary and life-long union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all other partners.
2. The aim of marriage is to create security and stability for both husband and wife, but also for the wider society by creating a protected environment which allows children to be born and raised in security.
3. For this reason, the family unit based on the marriage of a husband and a wife is the basic building block of our society.
4. If we undermine or do away with the marriage-based family as the basic building block of society, what are we going to replace it with? There is no other institution, that has stood the test of time and that could take its place.
5. The law shapes values and influences behaviour within our society. In the past, the law usually reflected the social consensus within society. However, more recently, the law has increasingly been used as an instrument for social engineering, forcing the agenda of a small minority upon the majority. The law should aim to support, rather than undermine, what the large majority consider to be the ideal environment to raise children: the marriage-based family of husband and wife.
6. Only the marriage of a man and a woman allows children to be born, giving them both a male and female role model. Children need both male and female role models for a healthy development. Studies that claim that children reared by same sex 'parents' are no worse off show major flaws. Indeed, there is some evidence that same-sex parenting leads to sexual promiscuity and children being more likely to become homosexuals themselves.
7. The attempt to redefine marriage by including a union of two same-sex individuals is misguided as same-sex marriages do not allow children to be born. Same-sex marriages do not offer children both the male and female parental role model they need for a healthy development.
8. Rights go along with responsibilities. Rights without responsibilities become destructive to the individual and to society. For example, the right to marry goes along with the responsibility of faithfulness to one's spouse.
9. The medical and social evidence regarding 'gay marriages', as legalised in two other countries, shows however that the majority of 'gay marriages' are characterised by a very short duration of the 'marriage' (often less than a few years) and a far higher number of additional sexual partners (on average eight), even when living in a 'civil union' or 'gay marriage'. A 'gay marriage' therefore is unlikely to provide a stable enough environment for children to be raised.
10. Those who, for whatever reason, separate or divorce should not be criticised. However, we need to recognise that, overall, marriage breakdown has devastating effects especially on children but also on the fabric and stability of society. 'Gay marriages', due to their inherent instability, would add to the burden that separation and divorce causes to our land.
11. Marriage breakdown is associated with essentially all of the major social ills such as childhood poverty, crime and especially juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, early drug and alcohol misuse, behavioural and emotional problems in childhood and adolescence. Marriage breakdown renders the children of separated or divorced parents at increased risk of experiencing separation and divorce in their own marriages in later life.
12. Because of its stabilising effect on society, the government should take a strong interest in

supporting and strengthening the marriage-based family, marriage being the lifelong union of a husband and wife. The government should not use the law as an instrument of social engineering and experimentation by introducing 'gay marriages', the long term adverse consequences of which may not be known for several generations.