

5-19-2012, COTR Texarkana

Title: Who Makes the Rules?

Purpose: Provoke people to choose to do what God says instead of what they feel like doing regarding sex and marriage.

Spiritual Truth: God makes the rules. We choose to follow or ignore what He says.

Text: Ge 2:7-17

Topic: Marriage, Same Sex Marriage, Commandments, Consequences

Who Makes the Rules?

I. Introduction

A. Genesis 2:7-17 (ESV) [Genesis is the book of beginnings. It's where we go for answers] ⁷ the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life... ¹⁵ The LORD God...put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**"

1. This is where the history of mankind begins. We learn about where we came from, work and responsibility. Verse 17 records the 1st commandment, a boundary to govern human behavior. God was clear. He has the authority to set the rules that govern life. People get to choose whether they will follow them or not.
2. God gave us free will to make choices. If we obey His commandments He will bless us. If we choose to do what we want instead of what God wants we will face the consequences. Shortly after this Adam and Eve disobeyed and all the pain, heartache and suffering in the human race can be traced to their choice.
3. This truth is relevant for us today as America debates same sex marriage.

B. Video: President Obama supporting same sex marriage.

1. Predictably public opinion is divided. On MSNBC those who disagree with the President were demeaned as bigots and homophobes motivated by hate.

C. Response from The Coalition of African American Pastors... "We cannot and will not remain silent while marriage...is undermined by our own President while using Christian language and relating it to civil rights... to link sexual behavior God calls sin to the righteous cause Martin Luther King gave his life for is abominable in and of itself,"...Marriage between one man and one woman was created and ordained by God, is the only stable union in which women are protected and cared for, in which children are born, reared and nurtured in safety, and upon which the very stability of our society rests...The hijacking of the civil rights movement by homosexuals, bisexuals and gender-confused people must and will stop. We fought for what is right, they are fighting for what is wrong...Our God requires it, our nation needs it and our people deserve it. We will stand in our pulpits, stand in the streets, stand in the chambers of policy making and stand at the ballot box for those who are for God's design of marriage and family. We will stand against all who are not,"..."

D. Today we'll explore what the Bible says about marriage, sex and sexual sin. The bigger issue in this debate is will we follow God's Word or do what we feel like doing.

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II. What does God say in the Bible say about marriage?

A. Genesis 2:20-24 (NIV) [In the Garden of Eden]

²⁰ ...for Adam **no suitable helper was found**.²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said ...she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."²⁴ For this reason **a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.**

B. Jesus and Paul both quoted this Scripture when discussing marriage.

1. Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV) [The Pharisees ask Jesus about divorce]

⁴ He answered, **"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,**⁵ and said, 'Therefore **a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh**?'⁶ ...What...**God has joined together, let not man separate.**"

2. Ephesians 5:31-33 (ESV) [Paul the Apostle discusses marriage]

³¹ "...**a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.**"³² **This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.**³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the **wife** see that she respects her **husband**.

C. Dictionary definitions may change but God's Word doesn't.

1. The Bible says marriage as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman.
2. *Webster's Dictionary 1828*: the legal union of uniting a man and a woman for life; marriage was instituted by God to prevent sexual immorality, provide happiness and care for children. Quote Heb 13:4; in a Scriptural sense marriage is the union between Christ and His church by the covenant of grace.
3. *Merriam- Webster Collegiate ed. 2008*: 1) the state of being united to a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife 2) the state of being united to a person of the same sex in a relationship like that of a traditional marriage...same-sex *marriage*
4. "What's right" has been redefined. Editors may change a Dictionary definition but God hasn't changed His mind.

III. What does God say in the Bible about sex?

A. Sex is God's idea. Its purpose is for procreation and enjoyment. He blessed/ approved of sex in the marriage of a male and female.

1. Genesis 1:27-28 (ESV) So God created man in his own image...; **male and female he created them.**²⁸ And **God blessed them.** And God said to them, **"Be fruitful and multiply** and fill the earth...
 - a. God blesses sex between a married man and woman.
 - b. God created the anatomy of a man and a woman to produce children.
 - c. A homosexual union isn't designed to fulfill God's plan to be fruitful and multiply.
2. Proverbs 5:18-19 (NIV)...may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.¹⁹ ...**may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.**
 - a. God designed our body for the pleasures associated with sex. Sex isn't dirty but it also isn't casual. God assigned the boundary of marriage to enjoy it.

B. God commands us to stay away from sexual sins.

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (NCV) **God wants you to be holy and to stay away from sexual sins.**⁴ **He wants each of you to learn to control your own body** in a way that is holy and honorable...⁸ **So the person who refuses to obey this teaching is disobeying God, not simply a human teaching...**

2. In the world if you're attracted to someone you have sex with them. It doesn't matter if it's for 1 night or if you move in together. What matters is that it feels right and you enjoy it.
 - a. Just because "it feels right" doesn't make it right.
3. The big issue in marriage and sexual matters is will I do what I want to do or what God says to do. Adam and Eve did what they wanted and it cost them.

C. What are sexual sins in the Bible?

1. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NIV) ...Do not be deceived: Neither the **sexually immoral** nor idolaters nor **adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders** ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ **...that is what some of you were.** But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ...
 - a. Fornication: often translated "sexually immoral" is consensual sexual intercourse between people of the opposite sex not married to each other.
 - b. "Culturally taboo" sexual sins are listed beside "culturally acceptable" sins of stealing, greed, drunkenness, etc.
 - c. There is hope we can change regarding sexual sins.
2. Matthew 5:28 (NCV) [Jesus raised the bar from the act to the thought]

²⁸ **But I tell you that if anyone looks at a woman and wants to sin sexually with her, in his mind he has already done that sin with the woman.**

 - a. This is why porn is wrong and sex on TV and movies sex is dangerous.
 - b. OT discusses sex between relatives, parents spouse, animals...

D. Who gets to decide what is sexually immoral? Supreme Court judges, the people's vote, a President, Mental Health professionals or has God already decided that for us and our decision is to obey or disobey Him.

IV. What does God say in the Bible say about homosexuality?

A. Genesis 19:4-5 (NIV) [Angels go to Sodom to rescue Lot, Abram's nephew]

⁴ **...all the men** from every part of the city of Sodom—both **young and old**—surrounded the house. ⁵ They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? **Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.**"

1. Jude 7 (NLT) And don't forget Sodom and Gomorrah...which were filled with immorality and every kind of **sexual perversion. Those cities were destroyed by fire and serve as a warning of the eternal fire of God's judgment.**
 - a. Archaeologists believe they have found the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - b. Before 1962 sodomy was a felony in all states. In 2003 the Supreme Court declared sodomy laws in the last 14 states unconstitutional in a Tx. case.
2. **Romans 1:18-27 (NIV) The wrath of God** is being revealed from heaven against all the **godlessness and wickedness** of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness... ²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for **a lie...** ²⁶ Because of this, God gave them over to **shameful lusts.** Even **their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.** ²⁷ **In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.**
3. What about the argument, "I was born that way?" I was born a sinner, too. Just because I was born with a desire for a particular sin doesn't mean I have to embrace and defend it.

V. Conclusion: Are people in sexual sin welcome at COTR?

A. Absolutely! I'm glad you're here. Church is a hospital for sinners to recover.

1. However, you can't be a leader or serve if you're living in open sexual sin. You can't openly flaunt your sin whatever it is.
2. I hope anyone in sexual sin will see the truth of God's Word and choose to submit to it. I love you enough to tell you the truth. That's why we talked about this today.

B. Summary: God makes the rules that govern sex and marriage. I've told you what the Bible says. The issue is whether we'll follow His rules or ignore them whether you're homosexual or heterosexual. I've decided to follow them. I'm praying you will, too. The choice is up to you.

VI. Response

A. Prayer: Commit to live by God's commands for sexual purity

B. Souls