

## ***255 More and more militant!***

When I came downstairs this morning, I remembered happily my articles about heaven-and-earth,<sup>[252,253]</sup> which were positive and encouraging, and hoped to continue along positive lines, but I thought I'd have a time of silent prayer first – this is what came instead, not so positive, sorry.

I won't claim 'God guided me'; it was probably just my obsession, but I started wondering what people 'out there' feel about the current discussions on gay marriage. From the final chapter of *Amazing Love*, I gathered that the vast majority of people in the UK, especially those under 35, are either ambivalent and can't understand what all the fuss is about, or are unhappy at the our discriminatory stance.

So I see the spectrum (I like spectra) as from militantly anti-gay-marriage to militantly pro, with most people somewhere in the middle. Then I added a dimension to my spectrum: people *inside/outside* the church. And my next dimension was *age range*. Finally *gender*. According to the last chapter of the book (I doubt you'll be surprised), the stats show overwhelmingly that the militant anti end of the spectrum is: inside church / over 55 / male.

Certainly, of the eight folks who challenge what I'm writng,<sup>[248]</sup> all are over 55, and only two are female – anecdotal, and inadmissible as evidence, I know.

And who runs the church? Primarily men over 55 – while congregations are generally weighted towards women – anecdotal, and inadmissible, I know.

Please could I ask those of you who are anti-gay-marriage, what is your motive? I assume you're concerned to uphold biblical truth, maybe wanting to assert the importance of family life, which is so much under pressure – great! Perhaps you're concerned about the spiritual lives of gay people – being constantly sexually immoral doesn't help one's eternal salvation, I guess.

Maybe it's that if we condone sexual immorality, the younger generation will be drawn in? One vicar I know vaguely (not one of my eight, but male, around 55) wrote to his congregation, claiming that those who support gay marriage 'are idolising self-fulfilment through sexual desire' and he wonders, 'what other forms of sexual relationship ... will be accepted next?'

Having started as ambivalent, I'm now militantly pro-gay-marriage – but only committed, covenantal gay relationships. Why? (I'll explain here, but see also my next article.<sup>[256]</sup>)

My prime concern is that the vast majority of people in the UK should know the love that God has for them, and I err on the side of being concerned for people under 35; and they tend to be people who either think it's a non-issue or who think that the church is actively (unlawfully?) discriminatory, and they would never darken our doors.

Secondly, I'm concerned about gay people, especially gay Christians, who feel... well, you can imagine how they feel: some have even committed suicide.

When I see loving gay couples who have stuck together despite all that society (and especially the church) throws at them, I want to celebrate their love – I do celebrate their love.

Paul Bev. (male, over 55) 21.3.23