

## **260 Constant Bible-inspired change**

Or: *Constant Jesus-inspired change*

A common comment is, ‘If God is all-loving and all-powerful, why doesn’t he...?’ The difficulty of being all-loving is that love doesn’t force or coerce. Love works *with* the beloved. And, let’s face it, God has a difficult job with us. But God has a plan.

Yes, I’ve been over the ‘starting with Abra[ha]m’ bit repeatedly but we need to remember that all the Bible characters (and writers) had an imperfect view of God, and yet God still used them and inspired their writing. When Jesus comes, we can finally *see* what God is like, but the NT writers still didn’t have a perfect view of God – they too were fallible, yet God inspired their writing.

Despite having ‘seen’ Jesus, *we’re* not perfect, so what must *we* do? Change. And that, for me, is what this is all about – constant change. A loving God wants things to be better tomorrow than they are today. So God inspired the fallible Bible-writers to give us texts that could inspire us towards change.

But as I’m sure you’ve noticed, in many church circles, ‘change’ is a dirty word. Both churches and individuals see it as their God-given duty to preserve The Truth, as contained in the Bible. Yes, at times, Christians have fought *against* what the church then believed (think: Reformation), but rather more often it has fought *against* change!

So I think God wants *Jesus-inspired* change. If someone wants to change something, check it out against what you know of Jesus. And if someone wants NOT to change something, ditto.

Because of our reluctance to change, it took centuries to get rid of slavery; and while Jesus made many counter-cultural moves to improve the treatment of women, it took centuries for women to begin to take their rightful place in church and society – and there are lots of other positive Bible-inspired (Jesus-inspired) changes we could name.

Wanting to make things better tomorrow than they are today, God has also inspired people to learn more about how the world works. But, as believers, we have to check the new ideas, as they might challenge what the Bible teaches, so we must check with what we know of Jesus.

Now, a growing number of Christians, noting what we’re learning about human sexuality, are questioning the NT writers’ attitude towards gay sexuality. So check it with what we know of Jesus. I think his priority would be: what enhances the lives of individuals; how can individuals know and experience the love of God?

Anyone wanting NOT to change our understanding of gay sex, has to justify, as I explained,<sup>[259]</sup> pushing gay people away from the message of Jesus, pushing your average non-churched person away from the message of Jesus, and potentially splitting the church – a big responsibility!

Can we not let individuals like me and Sue (i.e. not just gay Christians) follow our consciences? That would mean we could let gay people in to the joy and sanctity of marriage. Not a big ask.