

428 How (bad) theology causes damage (DRAFT 5)

This will remain in draft until someone can suggest any personal (or church) damage that might result from allowing people to choose to live in a same-sex 'marriage' (lifelong relationship).

Last time, I drafted an article where I looked at possible stances, using Gushee's three terms: 'traditionalist', 'revisionist' and 'avoidist'. Here, I've drafted two-thirds of an article, where I suggest the possible damage – personal, church and societal – of the church holding each of these stances. I'm giving suggestions for the first and last, and I'm inviting my traditionalist friends to supply the middle one.

I would stress that these are all *potential* forms of damage, although some have already happened to some people. Also, they are based on the damage caused by people holding the more extreme views.

Traditionalist

- 1) Gay Christians can feel guilty, looked down on, conflicted, rejected; some have even ended up committing suicide.
- 2) Gay couples may be asked to split up, and if they are 'unrepentant', they could be asked to leave their church.
- 3) Family relationships can be damaged when an offspring says that they are gay and this is rejected as untrue, untenable, unacceptable, mistaken, etc. The offspring may end up having to leave the family.
- 4) People outside the church, seeing this as judgementalism, will find themselves unable to take the church seriously, and could therefore be turned away from the gospel.
- 5) If the church is no longer taken seriously, society is robbed of the potential 'salt and light' that Christians can offer.

Revisionist (I'll start this off...)

- 1) Those of a traditionalist view may feel that they have to leave their church. (In Chris's case,^[427] this was for the sake of conscience; s/he was told s/he was always welcome.)
- 2) [other damages?... please supply]

Avoidist

Similar to traditionalist, I guess, though not so extreme, but it's traditionalist vs. revisionist that is the central issue for me.

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