

Marriage Matters



It's easy for discussions about **same-sex marriage** to go nowhere when speaking with people who don't believe in **what our Lord has to say** about marriage and families. To ease into that conversation, try out these talking points.

How does my gay marriage harm your marriage?

Marriage is not in essence a private relationship created exclusively for the benefit of those who enter it. It is a public institution that serves a social purpose, hence the reason for policy recognition of it.

The fight for same-sex marriage is a continuation of a fight for equal treatment under the law for all Americans. Aren't you on the wrong side of history?

We have history on our side. For over 2,000 years, marriage has been defined as being between one man and one woman.

If people don't choose to be gay, why should they be denied the right to marry who they love?

The nature of sexual orientation is very much subject to debate, but regardless of one's views on that debate, it doesn't change the nature of marriage, which is intrinsically the union of a man and a woman, connecting them to childbearing and childrearing.

You're just a bigot driven by hate and fear!

I believe that we should treat everyone with dignity and respect. Supporting marriage is about bringing men and women together as husbands and wives to be father and mother to their children. That's good for individuals and good for society, and that's why I'm proud to stand for biblical marriage.

Isn't the struggle for marriage equality a civil rights issue? Denying same-sex couples the freedom to marry is the same as a ban on interracial marriage!

We should affirm the civil rights of all individuals. But redefining marriage to include same-sex relationships is not a civil right. Besides that, racism keeps the races apart, which is a bad thing. Marriage united the two sexes for the good of society, which is a good thing.

You're biased because you base your views on religion.

You don't have to be religious to support the idea that marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife to be father and mother to any children their union produces.

If marriage is about children, what about couples who can't or won't have children?

Sound public policy is based on the rule, not the exception. The vast majority of marriages do produce children. While not every marriage will have children, every child needs a mom and a dad. Even childless marriages serve a broader social purpose by affirming the pattern of the only type of union with the potential to create children and to meet children's need for a mom and a dad.

Social science shows that there are no differences in the parenting outcomes for children raised in same-sex households.

Recent studies, including a report in the highly respected journal *Demography*, suggest that there's more to learn about how changing family forms affects children. They also confirm that children do better when raised by a married mom and dad. Check out, for instance, the *New Family Structures Study* by Mark Regnerus at UT-Austin.

What could be more pro-family than expanding the rules on who can be married?

Redefining marriage sends the message that marriage is about adult desire and not about the needs of children, that it is about adult emotional satisfaction, not a permanent union of a child's parents.

Why do you even care so much?

As a member of the LCMS, I'm thankful to continue to be a part of this dialogue. I am eager to continue to help teach marriage according to God's plan and gift. And I'm thankful to be a part of a church that offers Christ's forgiveness, love and salvation to all.