

GENERAL ASSEMBLY HOLY CONVOCATION – NOVEMBER 2014

RESOLUTION ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE

WHEREAS, the Church Of God In Christ believes the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God; and

WHEREAS, Genesis 1:27 defines the institution of marriage as the union of one man and one woman;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following statement shall serve to restate the position of the Church Of God In Christ regarding same sex marriage:

While the General Assembly of the Church Of God In Christ passed a proclamation clearly delineating its position on same sex marriage on April 13, 2004, the times dictate that we reaffirm that position amid the changing winds that have modified the norms of our nation. In light of this moral shift we confidently stand on the authority of Scripture to validate the definition of marriage.

Although marriage, in a civil context, is recognized by legal authorities, we hold that God established rules governing marriage long before governments began regulating the institution. As such, this sacred, God-ordained institution is to be a life-long, sexually exclusive relationship and divine covenant between one man and one woman.

The opening book of the Bible tells us: “A man will leave his father and his mother and he must cleave to his wife and they must become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). The Hebrew word “wife” connotes one who is a female human being. Jesus confirmed that those yoked together in marriage should be “male and female” (Matthew 19:4). Therefore, God intended marriage to be a permanent and an intimate bond between a man and a woman. Men and women are designed to complement each other so they may be capable of satisfying each other’s emotional, spiritual, and sexual needs and desires.

The Church Of God In Christ holds the institution of marriage in the highest regard and strongly opposes any legal sanction of marriage outside of its biblical context. Therefore, deviations from that context, such as the legalization of same-sex “marriage” cannot be supported by the Church Of God In Christ as a matter of biblical principle as we hold the Word of God as our standard for faith and practice. We therefore unequivocally affirm that marriage is a covenant relationship between a man and woman and reject all attempts to redefine marriage in terms of same-sex unions.

By restating our position on same sex marriage, we neither intend to defame or disparage any group of individuals nor are we moved by personal hatred. Our only intent is the defense of biblical marriage. We embrace Jesus' command to love our neighbor and reject the notion that love requires the affirmation of that, which is in conflict with our biblical perspective. We hold that there is no contradiction between Christian compassion and a call for biblical obedience and holy living.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Church Of God In Christ condemns acts of violence against and the subjugation of any person to verbal or physical harassment on the basis of their sexual practice. Such action violates the Christian's obligation to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that credential holders within the Church Of God In Christ, in obedience to God's command, will neither perform same sex marriages, nor bless or condone such a union. Our church properties will not be leased, rented, or loaned for any purpose related to such a union.

Submitted this day, Monday, November 10th, 2014 by the General Board:

**Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., Presiding
Bishop**

Bishop P.A. Brooks, First Assistant

Bishop J.W. Macklin, Second Assistant

Bishop Roy L.H. Winbush, Secretary

Bishop Frank O. White, Assistant Secretary

Bishop George D. McKinney

Bishop Nathaniel W. Wells

Bishop Sedgwick Daniels

Bishop J. Drew Sheard

Bishop Brandon B. Porter

Bishop Ted Thomas, Sr.

Bishop Lawrence M. Wooten

Ratified by the General Assembly on November 10, 2014