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To: Letters to Editor, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

From: Dr. Fillmer Hevener, Pastor, Guthrie Memorial Chapel

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Re.: Homosexual Marriage

Dear Editor:

The legal approval of homosexual marriage in the U.S. is forcing Virginians to re-examine the meaning of the sacred rite of marriage. Some contend that the singular basis for the union of people in marriage is the quality we call "love." What does the word "love" mean in its contemporary usage? In modern English we use the word in such contexts as: loving a car, loving an animal, loving a flower, loving a house, loving a friend, loving a spouse, etc. Pinning-down an objective, clear, comprehensive definition of "love" would be too lengthy for this letter; therefore, that challenge must wait for another time. Nevertheless, the fuzziness of the word's contemporary usage is related to the remainder of the content of this letter.

Therefore, if "love" is the singular element for marriage, how would society view the following?

- a. A man "loves" four other adult people, and these four people "love" him; the five wish to marry. What will be society's decision?
- b. A woman "loves" two other adult people, and these two people "love" her. The three wish to marry. What will be society's decision?
- c. A fifty-year-old man "loves" his mother who is seventy. They wish to marry. What will be society's decision? (We could complicate this example by making both of them twenty-five years younger!)
- d. A nineteen year-old biology major has been taught in her macro- evolution classes that "there is little or no disagreement that the *common ancestor of humans and chimpanzees* lived in Africa." (Italics mine.) She "loves" her chimp (which adores her) and decides to marry him. What will be society's response?

We have been teaching our youth (largely through the *theory* of macro- evolution) that they came about by chance and, therefore, have no responsibility to a higher power, a Creator, a Designer, who will hold them accountable for their choices.

The theory of macroevolution also takes from the concept of the sanctity of life which, if it came about by chance, has no special moral significance and, therefore, need not receive special protection.

Moral relativism has added to moral confusion among both adults and youth. If the platitude of the relativists is correct, "Right you are if you think you are," why shouldn't one do as he pleases? Such

claptrap has prompted many primitive acts in our society, one of which is the mass killing of millions of unborn children, and another is the promotion of homosexual marriage. The seed of homosexual marriage may be traced to the religious perversion of an ancient society determined to devise its own morals while rejecting God's instructions. Nimrod (Genesis 10:8) is considered by many to be the leader of this movement of rebellion.

An abundance of evidence makes it clear to the rational, objective mind that this world and the universe are the result of design by a Creator, not the result of blind chance. The vastness and precision of the universe as well as the complexity of human, plant, and animal life are products, not of chance, but of a Divine Creator, who is honored in the Bible by such poets and prophets as Moses, David, and Isaiah and by such non-Biblical sages as Dante, Milton, and Donne.

Although here we do not have the time nor space to go into depth when looking at what the Jewish/Christian Bible says about marriage, we shall look at several relevant passages:

1. ...a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife (female, singular).... Genesis 2:24,

2. ...let each man have his own wife (female, singular), and...each woman her own husband (male, singular).... 1 Timothy 3:2.

3. <sup>22</sup> You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. <sup>23</sup> Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. <sup>24</sup> Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. <sup>25</sup> For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. Leviticus 18: 22-25. Here, the Bible equates homosexuality with human/animal sex, a bestial relationship with both acts being considered an abomination.

4. <sup>26</sup> Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural sexual relations for unnatural ones. <sup>27</sup> In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error. <sup>28</sup> Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup> slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; <sup>31</sup> they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. <sup>32</sup> Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. Romans 1: 26-32.

Some homosexuals claim that they are born with this tendency and, therefore, should not be held responsible for their actions. Reliable research discounts this claim as the following study shows: ENCINO, Calif.--May 17, 1997—"Nearly 25 years after the American Psychiatric Association officially removed homosexuality from its Diagnostic Manual, labeling it a lifestyle choice rather than a psychological disorder, a California-based association of psychiatrists and psychologists

*has proven that homosexuals can change their orientation through intense therapy and a strong desire to change.”(Emphasis mine.)*

**Let’s consider two relevant analogies of aberrant behavior by two people claiming that their deviant actions are “natural”:**

**1. A married man promises to be faithful to his wife. After marriage he decides that his “natural” bent is to be a philanderer and that he should not, therefore, be held accountable for his unfaithfulness. The wife files for a divorce; the judge agrees that the husband is responsible for his actions, granting the wife a divorce plus a generous settlement.**

**2. A thief claims in court that he is born with the tendency to steal and argues before the judge that he, therefore, should not be held accountable for his actions. The judge rejects his claim, fines him heavily, and tosses him into jail. We of sound mind are responsible for our actions. Solomon writes “... In due season God will judge everyone, both good and bad, for all their deeds.” Ecclesiastes 3:17 (NLT.) Many other Biblical passages (revealing God’s instructions and promises) teach judgment by Jehovah.**

*Along with internal evidence, there is an abundance of external evidence from both sacred and secular history, archaeology, and fossil records, to show that the Bible is no ordinary book; there is a wealth of objective information supporting its claim to Divine origin.*

**Therefore, in matters of marriage and many other moral/social issues, multitudes in our society are choosing man’s wisdom (relativism) over God’s wisdom and moral guidance. Are we prepared to endure the consequences of our choices? Remember the fate of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Rome. The apostle Paul instructs us as he did the Romans that “... the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23. Paul is placing before us two choices, eternal life or eternal death! Which shall we choose?**