

# THE REGISTRATION OF CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS SAME SEX MARRIAGE



## Annex E: RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

### 1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Scottish Christian Party "Proclaiming Christ's Lordship"

Title Mr  Ms  Mrs  Miss  Dr  *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Boyd

Forename

Donald

### 2. Postal Address

Scottish Christian Party

14 Crawford Road

Milngavie

Postcode G62 7LG

Phone 01463 796952

Email:

donald.boyd@scottishchristianparty.org.uk

### 3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual  / Group/Organisation   
*Please tick as appropriate*

(a)	Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?	<i>Please tick as appropriate</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis	<i>Please tick ONE of the following boxes</i>	
	Yes, make my response, name and address all available	<input type="checkbox"/>	or
	Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address	<input type="checkbox"/>	

(c)	The name and address of your organisation <b>will be</b> made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).	Are you content for your <b>response</b> to be made available?	
		<i>Please tick as appropriate</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

(d)	We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?	<i>Please tick as appropriate</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
-----	---	---	--

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

### The registration of civil partnerships

#### Question 1 (Paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13)

Do you agree that legislation should be changed so that civil partnerships could be registered through religious ceremonies?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer.

#### Comments

No: we do not agree.

Civil partnerships are civil and secular in nature, as outlined in the Civil Partnership Act 2004. They should remain so. Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies.

However, civil partnerships are an anomaly available only to homosexual partners and forbid spinster sisters to have the legal privileges afforded to civil partners. This is unjust and unequal. Civil partnership is a misnomer; the proper term is homosexual partnership. A true civil partnership would not define the partnership by sexuality. The element of sexuality in civil partnership should be removed. Civil partnerships were introduced to deal with perceived inequalities in law for homosexual partners, but the solution is itself unequal. The same legal privileges should be afforded to other partnerships such as spinster sisters or bachelor brothers. This will preserve the distinctive rights, privileges and benefits of traditional marriage, which is manifestly different from civil partnerships.

It is a wrong course to redefine marriage to include civil partnerships as it will lead to further redefinitions and create further anomalies. See our general comments at the end of this submission. It is better to take sexuality out of civil partnerships, and to retain their civil and secular nature.

Consequently it is not necessary for the state to introduce religious ceremonies in relation to current civil partnerships. Otherwise, the state is taking on more than is its province if it should attempt to do so. The history of the Scottish Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Covenanting struggle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Patronage controversy of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Disruption of the 19<sup>th</sup> century should warn the governments in Holyrood and Westminster of the danger of the state over-reaching itself in dictating matters of religion.

Question 2 (Paragraphs 2.14 to 2.19)

Do you think that the proposals in England and Wales on registration of civil partnerships in religious premises would be appropriate for Scotland?

Yes

No

Don't know

If you have answered no, please explain what elements of the proposals in England and Wales you consider inappropriate for Scotland.

Comments

No. Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies. As such, civil partnership registration has little to do with specific premises but only with the legal process. It is quite inappropriate to be associated with religious premises in Scotland, which finds expression in the differences about 'approved premises' in current marriage arrangements in Scotland and England.

Paragraph 3.34 of the UK Government consultation introduces a deliberate anomaly into the legislation by involving a religious celebrant *in their religious capacity* to transact a purely civil and secular registration. This is inconsistent with the secular nature of civil partnership. It introduces an unnecessary anomaly which seems intended to blur the distinction between civil partnership and marriage, and thus to pave the way towards redefining marriage to include homosexual partnerships.

This should be opposed, and the government should retain the civil and secular nature of civil partnership, and make them more equal.

Question 3 (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)

Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in religious premises?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

No. Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion, religious ceremonies, or religious premises as such.

Paragraph 2.20 continues the confusion from introducing the anomaly of religion into a civil registration. It states: "This would be in line with the concept of religious freedom." This is wrong. If religious people want to have a ceremony, let them organise one – that is religious freedom. Such a ceremony has nothing to do with a civil registration.

In fact, it is more likely to introduce religious coercion and thus to be quite contrary to the concept of religious freedom. The current unequal equalities legislation is already responsible for religious coercion of some employees.

Question 4 (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)

Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in other places agreed between the celebrant and the couple?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

No. Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion, religious ceremonies or religious celebrants as such (see answer to Question 2).

Question 5 (Paragraph 2.25)

Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes. Religious bodies should not be forced by the state (see answer to Question 1). Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies.

Question 6 (Paragraphs 2.26 and 2.27)

Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to register civil partnerships if their religious body has decided against registering civil partnerships?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, they should not be allowed, not only because civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies, but this will promote internal dissent in churches and undermine the decision-making process of the religious body.

Question 7 (Paragraphs 2.28 to 2.30)

Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to register civil partnerships?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, because civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies, and the state should not be interfering with churches, their ceremonies, freedom of religion and liberty of conscience.

Question 8 (Paragraphs 2.31 to 2.35)

Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to register civil partnerships against their will?

Do you favour:

- Option 1   
Option 2   
Neither

If you have another option, please describe it.

Comments

Neither option. Option one proceeds on the assumption that civil partnership should be equivalent to marriage; and option two continues the anomaly of involving a religious celebrant in a civil registration. Option two is simply a stepping stone towards option one in due course.

This question is about avoiding religious coercion. This is best done by acknowledging that civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies. If civil partnerships are to be retained, they should retain their civil nature and become genuinely equal by removing the preferential and discriminating sexual element from them.

Question 9 (Paragraphs 2.36 to 2.40)

Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to register civil partnerships. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

- Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, because civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion, religious ceremonies, or religious premises as such, and the state should not be interfering with churches. There is no need to legislate about religious premises for a civil registration.

Who are these aggressive people who want to use religious premises “against the wishes of the relevant religious body”? Question 9 presupposes the aggressive behaviour of some sections of the homosexual lobby whose track record suggests that they will bring test cases at the tax-payers’ expense.

Such a problem does not arise if the secular and civil nature of civil partnerships is recognised and retained.

### Same sex marriage

Question 10 (Paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12)

Do you agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow same sex marriage?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

### Comments

Most certainly not. There is no such thing as same sex marriage. It is an oxymoron – a contradiction in terms.

Civil government legislates for and regularises, but does not create, marriage. The government has no right to redefine marriage as it did not create it. Marriage is between one man and one woman, usually to provide a father and a mother for children.

The redefining of marriage has consequences for families and children, which this consultation does not even begin to address, such as:

1. The detrimental effect upon children. This consultation does not even mention, far less discuss, families nor children except in footnote references, quotations of legislation, or in the list of consultees in Annex F. This exposes and condemns the consultation as totally inadequate and worse than useless, because it carelessly and recklessly proposes detrimental changes to family life without discussing them.

This is not even a consultation as to whether Scotland should introduce this legislation, but rather it is about the manner and details of its introduction. The questions are drafted on the assumption that this redefining of marriage will be approved, and it has completely overlooked the effect upon families and children.

2. Article 12 of the European Convention of Human Rights provides that: "Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right." Redefining marriage will give homosexuals "the right...to found a family". The financial cost in terms of adoption and In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF), to accommodate the fact that homosexuals cannot bear children, has not been considered in this inadequate consultation. The social and psychological cost of this unnatural and harmful social experiment upon adopted children having two fathers or two mothers is not worth paying.

3. The redefinition of a family is introducing new anomalies. Already two homosexual couples are disputing the children adopted using IVF techniques for a lesbian couple, and questioning who is responsible for the children. Canada has legalised homosexual marriage, and we are led to believe that litigation is now underway in one Canadian state to legalise polygamy. Children are confused by this modern social experiment and we should not add to this confusion.

4. This strikes at the fifth commandment to honour one's father and one's mother.

The Scottish government's view in favour of marriage for same sex couples "is grounded in our commitment to equality, and our support for stable and committed relationships." This is not solid ground.

1. This is an inadequate argument for redefining marriage. One cannot make two different things equal simply by assertion or legislation. An apple cannot be made equal to an orange, although there are many things about each which can be asserted to be equal or even made equal.

2. Marriage is not even correctly defined as it is not simply about stable and committed relationships but about families and children. The redefinition of marriage changes the definition of family and parents, and alters rights regarding children. These topics are not even mentioned in this consultation document and this shows its inadequacy as a basis for decision-making and legislation.

3. "stable and committed relationships" is not a definition of marriage. Two spinster sisters can be in a stable and committed relationship, living in the same home for decades, but they cannot have the privileges of civil partnership, and they are forbidden these because civil partners are not allowed to be related to each other.

Question 11 (Paragraph 3.13)

Do you agree that religious bodies and celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, especially as there is no such thing as same sex marriage, nor "solemnising" them.

Legislation cannot change the definition of marriage.

This question is about avoiding religious coercion. No-one should "be required" to perform civil partnerships as they currently stand, far less this new proposed anomaly. Conscientious objection on religious grounds has already been undermined with civil partnership legislation, and this law needs to be revised and improved.

Question 12 (Paragraphs 3.14 to 3.18)

Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex **civil** marriage only?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

No; we do not agree with it either as religious or civil, because there is no such thing as same sex marriage.

Legislation cannot change the definition of marriage.

The choice of answers cannot yield the real intention of a respondent, with the result that some Christian campaigners have advised to abstain on this question. Yes or No could be misinterpreted. It requires a Neither option to cover those who do not want same-sex marriage at all. This shows the tendentious nature of the questions and the inadequacy of this consultation.

Question 13 (Paragraph 3.19)

Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex marriage, **both** religious and civil?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

No; we do not agree with it either as religious or civil, because there is no such thing as same sex marriage.

Legislation cannot change the definition of marriage.

Question 14 (Paragraphs 3.23 and 3.24)

Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, especially as there is no such thing as same sex marriage, nor 'solemnising' it.

Legislation cannot change the definition of marriage.

Civil government should not be interfering with churches, nor requiring anyone to act against their conscience.

Question 15 (Paragraphs 3.25 and 3.26)

Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to solemnise same sex marriages if their religious body has decided against solemnising same sex marriage?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, but not because the state has any right to forbid it but because 1. there is no such thing as same sex marriage; 2. the duties of religious celebrants in their capacity as religious celebrants is for the relevant religious bodies to decide, not the state; and 3. the state should not promote nor sustain dissent within a church.

Question 15 arises only in a particular context which should not exist in law in any case. The proposal is seeking to accomplish matters outside the remit of civil government.

Question 16 (Paragraphs 3.27 and 3.28)

Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, however it is not for the state to meddle with the internal workings of a Christian church. For such a question to arise only demonstrates that the state is treading on very sensitive ground in trying to redefine marriage and in telling churches what they can and cannot do. If the state legislates on this question, it suggests that it has authority to tell the Church what to do. It does not. See our answers to Questions 1, 7 and 10.

Question 17 (Paragraphs 3.29 to 3.33)

Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to solemnise same sex marriage against their will?

Do you favour:

Option 1

Option 2

Neither

Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer and if you have another option, please describe it.

Comments

Neither option. Option one continues the assumption that marriage can be redefined whereas there is no such a thing as same sex marriage. Option two encourages a two-tier authorisation within religious bodies - an unwarranted interference by the state. The consultation document has warned in paragraph 3.25 about the danger of undermining the decision-making process of a religious body.

This question is about avoiding religious coercion. This is best done by acknowledging that same sex marriage is an oxymoron and does not exist.

Question 18 (Paragraphs 3.34 to 3.39)

Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to solemnise same sex marriage. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

Yes

No

Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes, because 1. same sex marriage does not exist and has nothing to do with the Christian religion, religious ceremonies or religious premises as such. Further, 2. the state should not be interfering with churches and it has no authority to legislate on internal decisions made by religious bodies. If the state legislates on this question, it suggests that it has authority to tell the Church what to do. It does not.

Who are these aggressive people who want to use religious premises “against the wishes of the relevant religious body”? Question 18 presupposes the aggressive behaviour of some sections of the homosexual lobby whose track record suggests that they will bring test cases at the taxpayers’ expense.

Such a problem does not arise if same sex marriage is recognized as an oxymoron and is abandoned. By continuing with such a proposal, the government is stoking up internal strife inside religious bodies and within society itself, contrary to its own warning in paragraph 3.25 about the danger of undermining the decision-making process of a religious body, and its intended purpose of religious freedom stated in paragraph 2.20.

Question 19 (Paragraph 3.41)

If Scotland should introduce same-sex marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?

Yes   
No   
Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Woe betide Scotland if this Scottish Government (not “Scotland”) introduces legislation and persuades the Scottish Parliament to create “same sex marriage”. It will be a perpetual blot upon the memory of this first majority Scottish National Party Government for all of history to recall. “Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees” Isaiah 10:1.

Question 19 implies that civil partnerships are a temporary anomaly, introduced to pave the way to redefining marriage. They are certainly an unequal anomaly. Question 19 should have an option to answer “Neither” because 1. Yes or No can be misinterpreted as to the respondent’s true intention and 2. “Neither” gives the option to have neither same sex ‘marriage’ nor civil partnerships as they currently stand. This shows yet again the inadequacy of this consultation paper.

No, civil partnership should not remain available because we do not agree with civil partnerships as currently defined. See our answer to Question 1. If, however, civil partnerships are retained, they should be redefined to remove the sexual element, and create real equality instead of this unequal and spurious equality which has driven forward recent equalities legislation. “People say, The way of the Lord is not equal. But as for them, their way is not equal. Yet you say, The way of the Lord is not equal. I will judge you every one after his ways” says the Lord (Ezekiel 33:17,20).

Question 20 (Paragraph 4.19)

Do you have any other comments?

Yes   
No

We are particularly interested in your views on:

- potential implications of the proposals for transgender people (paragraph 3.42)
- possible transitional arrangements (paragraphs 3.43 and 3.44);
- recognition of Scottish same sex marriages elsewhere (paragraphs 3.45 to 3.49);
- any comments on forced marriage (paragraphs 3.51 and 3.52)
- any comments on sham marriage (paragraph 3.53)
- potential financial implications (paragraphs 4.01 to 4.08);
- potential equality implications (paragraphs 4.09 to 4.14).

Comments

Regarding transgender:

There is no such thing as a marriage of two people of the same sex and this should not be recognised in law. Responsibility lies with transgender persons to be transparent with current and future spouses, and personnel responsible for solemnizing marriage.

Regarding transitional arrangements:

Civil partnerships between homosexuals were not introduced as equivalent to marriage, and to transform them into marriage is legislation by stealth. It is an abuse of governmental power to treat the public as if they cannot see how civil partnership has been used as a Trojan horse to manipulate the legislative process. There should be no need for transitional arrangements as there is no such thing as homosexual marriage.

International recognition:

Scotland and the UK should not recognise homosexual marriage. It is a legislative mistake for the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006 to legitimise without review marriages, including muslim polygamy, contracted in another country (paragraph 3.45, footnote 10). This should be reversed, otherwise we will introduce further anomalies and undermine our legislation by accepting decisions made in other countries without our input nor our consent.

Polygamy and homosexual 'marriages' which are legalised overseas are coming into the UK through this legal loophole more easily than illegal immigrants slip through our border controls. If foreign countries permit forced marriage or marriage with an underage child, our Family Law legislation, while recognising this for the practical purposes of everyday life, should not legitimise it nor grant the benefits of marriage without review. Otherwise this

drives a coach and horses through our own legislative process, creates anomalies in our law, and undermines our protest against forced marriages abroad.

It is a spineless capitulation of our democratic principles that we should give such fawning homage to such ungodly foreign legislation. Rather, our governments in Holyrood and Westminster should protect our borders from international law, and close this loophole in the Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006 and equivalent legislation.

We object to Scotland being used as the thin end of the wedge as far as UK legislation is concerned, just as Scotland objected to being the guinea pig for the Poll Tax.

It is a waste of tax payers' money for our officials "to work with other countries so the marriages could be recognised overseas" (paragraph 3.48).

Further, it is reprehensible that the Prime Minister David Cameron is threatening to withhold overseas aid because some African countries will not comply with his views on homosexual marriage. This contrasts with the double standards applied to some muslim countries which currently put homosexuals to death. It is shameful that the UK should export its sinful practices by diplomatic pressure, and more so by financial and other means of coercion.

The Scottish Christian Party is opposed to forced or sham marriages.

The proposals in this consultation are a waste of money and will be extremely expensive as it will impact the whole of society, as well as those working in the civil service. The consultation document demonstrates yet again its short-sighted inadequacy by failing to address the full implications of this momentous proposal. It will encourage homosexual tourism to exploit differences in legislation.

We have no confidence in the Equality Impact Assessment. Current equality legislation has shown itself to be unequal, with case law demonstrating that homosexual considerations are higher up the pecking order than Christian conscientious objection. *Animal Farm* by George Orwell demonstrates that those who shout loudest for equality are simply manipulating the system to promote themselves. "Some animals are more equal than others." The ungodly have always complained that God's ways are not equal (Ezekiel 33:17,20).

The homosexual lobby has used equality to promote its own ends, and politicians have failed to see that current Equalities legislation has created new inequalities. They have been deceived into thinking that this unequal Equalities legislation improves our society whereas it is both corrosive and destructive of family, cohesive education, social cohesion, toleration and true equality.

“The Government considers that the proposals in this paper would increase religious freedom” (Paragraph 4.11). The Scottish Christian Party thinks the exact opposite. The persecution of Christians in the UK under our unequal Equalities legislation already exists and it will only get worse with these proposals.

## **Concluding general comments**

Civil partnerships have nothing to do with the Christian religion or religious ceremonies. Civil partnership is a misnomer because it is not available to two sisters or two brothers but only to homosexual couples, therefore the proper term is homosexual partnerships. A true civil partnership would not define the partnership by sexuality but by some other term.

There is no such thing as same sex marriage. Homosexual marriage is an oxymoron – a contradiction in terms.

Marriage is a divine and a natural ordinance, between one man and one woman, and usually provides a father and a mother for children. The state has no right to redefine marriage as the state did not create it. Civil government legislates for and regularises marriage and cannot redefine it.

The redefining of marriage has consequences for families and children which this consultation does not even begin to address, because they are not even mentioned in the consultation, far less discussed.

If homosexual behaviour is normalized by redefining marriage, the consequences for society and education in our schools will be devastating, and these consequences are not even mentioned, far less discussed. If the agenda of the aggressive homosexual lobby continues to be followed, then young children will be taught in school to explore and experiment with homosexual behaviour.

In their literature for schools, some aggressive homosexual groups are indoctrinating children to disagree with their parents and to challenge and rebel against parental authority. As the consultation paper acknowledges the dangers of fomenting dissent within churches, the Government should recognize the danger of teaching and encouraging children to disagree with their parents and rebel against parental authority. The whole scope of this consultation undermines the authority of parents.

The consultation does not consider the health implications of homosexual behaviour. The Government is promoting healthy lifestyles, whereas homosexual behaviour promotes an inherently unhealthy lifestyle.

The consultation document concentrates on the political process for making this change. It is consulting about how to make the change to redefine marriage to include homosexual partnerships, in one step or two. It is not a true consultation about the issues at all, in spite of the aspirations in the Ministerial Foreword: “The Scottish Government is committed to detailed and

thorough consultation in this area, and to further careful consideration of the implications of equality and human rights law for any proposals.”

Instead of legislating for the wishes of the people, this Scottish Government is trying to change people’s opinions through the medium of legislation rather than education; through the threat of the penal code rather than through reasoned argument. Scotland needs Christian standards of debate, tolerance and reason. One tolerates matters of which one does not approve, but the aggressive homosexual lobby will not rest satisfied until they force Christians to approve of their homosexual behaviour. This is not toleration but aggressive imposition, offending liberty of conscience, freedom to preach the Gospel, and creating social unrest.

This gives us no confidence that the Scottish Government’s policy makers have worked their way through the consequences of this proposal.

We note that **ANNEX F: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS WHO HAVE BEEN SENT THIS PAPER** does not include the Scottish Christian Party. As a political party with a Christian ethos, we are unable to find an equitable explanation for this omission. At best it is oversight, but possibly incompetence, and it is indicative of the limitations of the compilers of this consultation process who have omitted to consider children and family in this consultation document.

The Deputy First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, writes in her ministerial foreword: “we will also meet face to face with religious bodies and other key organisations during the consultation period.” The Scottish Christian Party is one such key organisation, combining in our *raison d’être* both Christianity and politics. We are more than ready to meet with the Justice Directorate to discuss the issues arising from the consultation.

It does not augur well for our democracy and the democratic process when those shouting loudest for their version of equality cannot demonstrate inclusiveness in debate.

We are concerned that there is no political party in the Scottish Parliament which has articulated the Christian attitude to homosexual behaviour as explained in the Holy Scriptures, in this 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. If good government requires a strong opposition, then the composition of this Scottish Parliament will not yield balanced nor good legislation on this matter. We look in vain for a distinctive Christian voice and response in the Scottish Parliament.

Such Governmental short-sightedness is seen also in the drafting of recent Bills, such as the poor initial draft of the Bill against stalking, and the undue haste in trying to pass a Bill against sectarianism. The Bill against stalking highlighted the inability of paid individuals to do their job, and the Bill against sectarianism only alarms us that our legislators cannot see the consequences of their own actions. The Scottish Christian Party has lost confidence in our legislature to produce balanced legislation.

## Inadequacies of the consultation

The current consultation process manifests the same haste and lack of inclusive and comprehensive foresight of its consequences as in the fore-mentioned Bills.

The consultation process itself manifests several inadequacies which renders it not fit for purpose.

1. It fails to address adequately the effect upon families, children, schools, society, employment, churches and public finances in redefining marriage.

2. There is little awareness and an alarming inability to see that in this proposal the state is interfering with churches to an alarming extent (see our answer to Question 1). Legislating for the intermixing of civil and religious activities is fraught with dangers and has a long history in Scotland, requiring a mix of legislative skills, genuine inclusiveness, and a historical awareness of civil and ecclesiastical history, which is sadly lacking in our present Governments' consultative processes.

3. The questions in the consultation paper presume a set of answers favourable to redefining marriage. The haste in its design is seen in that 1. the compilers cannot make up their mind if it is "same-sex" or "same sex", both in the consultation document and in the questionnaire, highlighting the fragmented, non-unified thinking behind this exercise, without a final editor ensuring the coherence of the whole; 2. they are unable to see the ambiguity of some of their questions and the inadequate options for response; 3. there is an inappropriate use of negatives in the questions which is liable to confuse the respondent and may yield an unintended answer; 4. the questions in this consultation paper presuppose that civil partnerships may include a religious component, and that marriage can be redefined. Whatever religious ceremonies may be performed, these should not be included in the definition of civil partnership. The confusion caused by this two-tier set of questions, either changing civil partnership or the definition of marriage, are similar to the recent discussion about the confusion if there is a two question Referendum on Scottish Independence, so that it will be difficult to know clearly what the public wants.

4. The two choices in this consultation process, either incorporating religious ceremonies into civil partnership registration or introducing same sex marriage, are fixing the outcome as either one or the other. This is not true consultation because the options of 1. the *status quo*; 2. abolishing civil partnerships and 3. improving civil partnerships to become genuinely equal are nowhere to be seen. This is manipulation of the consultation process.

5. All told, the Scottish Christian Party has no confidence in those conducting this consultation process, and even less in those who will draft the Bill which the Scottish Government wishes. We will watch with interest to see who are the first group to fall foul of this legislation, and who are the first group to abuse it. The proposed legislation will not improve cohesion in our society,

but it will be used as a device to criminalise Christians and others who will continue to oppose unequal Equalities legislation and this international unequal equalities campaign.

6. It will be a mark of perpetual disgrace, and a blot on Scottish history, that no sooner has the Scottish National Party formed a majority Government than one of its first measures is a moral and social revolution of such a nature that it will destroy the time-honoured understanding of marriage, undermine the family, threaten the well-being of children, disrupt Scottish education, compromise healthy living, satisfy the communistic agenda of cultural Marxism, introduce anomalies into Scottish Law which will leave a legacy of legislative confusion, and be a stick with which the aggressive homosexual lobby can continue to beat Christians. The over-weening desire to satisfy the wishes of the homosexual lobby has led to the judicial blindness which has overtaken our nation, following on decades of Christian neglect.

The Scottish Christian Party is thankful to God for the opportunity to register our firm protest against these proposals, and we pray that the Scottish Government will be sufficiently enlightened to draw back from such unnecessary proposals, and we call upon the Scottish Government to abandon these proposals.

“Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees”

The prophet Isaiah 10:1.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

The wise king Solomon, Proverbs 14:34.

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”

The Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 6:10.