

Behind the Smokescreen of Proposition 8

By Glenn Lambdin

Several months back, I wrote a piece on why I supported same-sex marriages. As I stated then, I am a supporter of the American ideal that mandates equality for all Americans, all the time, and without exception. I believe this to be the foundation of American democracy and the basis for my support of same-sex marriages.

In our upcoming election, Proposition 8 is attempting to add a constitutional amendment to deny same-sex marriages and overturn the current State Supreme Court decision that allows same-sex marriages. For those of us that are opposed to Prop. 8, and are in favor of same-sex marriages, it's a simple matter of equality for all Californians. Unfortunately, the proponents of Proposition 8, those that are against same-sex marriages, are promoting their cause via careful wordsmithing and by misdirecting your attention away from their true core values. To reveal their honest feelings towards same-sex marriages would force them to admit publicly that they are not interested in equality, but rather are determined to force their religious dogma on the entire state. The proponents are doing everything they can to side-step the fact that their cause is really nothing more than your garden-variety discrimination and homophobia rooted in religious doctrine.

Starting with the legal name of Prop. 8, it's easy to see how the proponents are side-stepping and throwing smoke screens. The Official Voter Information Guide that was sent to every registered voter in California lists the legal name of Prop. 8 as, "Eliminates Right of Same -Sex Couples to Marry. Initiative Constitutional Amendment." Now that's pretty clear. It "eliminates" a "right" of a specific class of Californians. The proponents, wishing to create a diversionary smoke screen, refuse to call the initiative by its legal and rightful name and instead call Prop. 8 the "Protect Marriage Amendment." Not a bad tactic but I have to ask them, "Protect marriage from what?" How can continuing to allow same-sex couples their current constitutional right to marry possibly harm a single existing marriage or a future marriage? It can't, and again, it's a simple case of discrimination and homophobia.

Protectmarriage.com is the mouthpiece for the proponents and lists many supporters, links, and arguments. Several of their statements caught my attention. For example, this one. "...Californians will be forced to not just be tolerant of gay lifestyles, but face mandatory compliance regardless of their personal beliefs." And I have to ask them, "As opposed to what? To be allowed to be intolerant of gay lifestyles?" And since when should personal beliefs supercede fundamental rights of equality and constitutional law? Or, how about this statement from protectmarriage.com. "The California Supreme Court's ruling that created same-sex "marriage" is a threat to every family." Well, let me say with all certainty that it didn't pose a single threat to my family. Of course, the proponents of such an outrageous statement fail to demonstrate how one single family was "threatened" by the Court's ruling. Cut through the smokescreen and all that is left is homophobia.

So who are these proponents and from where are they really basing their claims? Protectmarriage.com lists the proponents mainly as religious organizations. Religious organizations that justify their homophobic doctrine in part by a biblical scripture found in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: (New International Version) *"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God."*

While I recognize that the proponents honestly believe that they are doing God's work, I find it sad that they don't have the courage to honestly, openly, and proudly stand for their convictions. Rather, they hide behind their smokescreens and deception. What I find even sadder is that the biblical text found in 1 Corinthians was not even the words of Jesus but rather the words of Paul the Apostle, a Roman, the founder of Christianity as we know it today, and a man who never even met Jesus yet claimed to be Jesus' spokesman. Two thousand years later, Paul's words still evoke discrimination and bigotry.

Cut through the smokescreens of Proposition 8, and the real question is, "Does discrimination belong in our State Constitution?"