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A BRIDGE TOO FAR

The Vatican, on December 18, 2023 under the direction of Pope Francis crossed a line that was heretofore thought unthinkable. Catholic priests can now bless same-sex couples. Now comes the tricky part, the blessing of same sex-couples, while maintaining a “strict ban on gay marriages”. Who doesn’t see the glaring flaw in such contorted “logic”? Will the Catholic Church now “bless” hetero-sexual couples to co-habit (live together) without being married?

The “blessing”, according to the Vatican, under Pope Francis’ direction, intimated such blessings could be offered provided they weren’t confused with the ceremony of marriage. In the new document, it reaffirms that marriage is a lifelong union between a man and a woman, on that there is agreement. However, it does appear that the Catholic Church is willing to sanction same sex couples in a civil union living arrangement. It seems as if the Catholic Church has indeed gone a bridge too far. How long before other denominations follow suit?

The open assault against moral standards is clearly on display and now within the ranks of those who at least had made some claim to be following the Scriptures. It is hard to drink in how quickly the moral fabric has changed on seemingly all fronts. In the 11th Psalm, David writes, *“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* (v3) The clarion call needs to be heard as to the import of holding steadfastly to what is found in God’s Word. It was true in the first century and remains true to this day. Notice what Jude wrote in his epistle, verse three. *“Beloved while I was making every effort to*

write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

No man has the authority to change what is found in the Scriptures. While man may try and argue that the Scriptures need to bend with the times and have a sense of fluidity, but such couldn’t be further from the truth. *“All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, but the Word of the Lord abides forever.”* (1Peter 1:24-25) A few chapters later, Peter would write, *“Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were the utterance of God...”* (1Peter 4:11)

Do you remember when you were in elementary school and the teacher told you to “put on your thinking cap”? Put on your thinking cap. If a homosexual lifestyle was to be accepted and “blessed”, why would Paul write in 1Corinthians 6:9-11 the following. *“Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor evildoers, nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but you were washed...”* If such were to be acceptable, why did they need to be changed? So why not “bless” swindlers and thieves as well?

What’s next to be deemed acceptable? Just as in the days of Jeremiah, we stand at the crossroads. *“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it...”* (Jeremiah 6:16) (wbe)

THE BULWARK