

Foreign Citizenship is Not An Exclusion Test Solely for Parliamentarians

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As of October 2017 we here in Australia are now faced with several of our federal parliamentarians being judged ineligible to serve as representative members of Parliament because of their non-compliance with the foreign citizenship test for holding such positions within Federal Parliament. We can note that the greatest impact of a negative finding by the High Court of Australia is being felt by the current Government that has just lost its democratic majority as a consequence.

However, the issue for discussion is the effect of Section 44 of the Australian Constitution that precludes certain people from entering parliamentary service; and I highlight that it is a law that determines qualification and it is the consequence of breaking that law that provides the barrier from entry. This clearly demonstrates for us the purpose of having law, and we can recall the saying that without law we would be a lawless nation void of structural functionality and a haven for everything that is bad and evil in humankind.

If we strip away the outer layers of this matter and concentrate on the core issue of why we have laws in the first place, we quickly see that law is necessary in any structured society to not only maintain an orderly environment that guarantees citizen's certain rights, but here in Australia it is perhaps more accurate to say that it gives us a Bill of Wrongs, that is, it identifies what we are not allowed to do. It also provides through a system of punishment for law-breakers to redeem themselves by serving a penalty – which can be in a variety of forms.

The historic source from which today's societies took their law from, and I might add, heavily copied from, is the laws that were imposed upon the fledgling Hebrew nation by God some thirty three hundred years ago. We still refer to them today and nearly all structured societies around the world have them. They are commonly identified in the Hebrew scripts of Exodus; from where the Ten Commandments from God are described, and the following Books collectively referred to as the Pentateuch, or Books of Learning that contain over six hundred laws passed down from God.

The purpose of the Law was to systemise what citizens could and could not do in the lands that their government administered over. That has not changed over the years either. It codified a way of living that gave protections to the community and preserved the way of life that they were comfortable living within. If we travel the world we would observe that there are common basic laws, for instance, outlawing killing, assault on another, protection of children, stealing, and treason. Where differences can exist is in summary matters like

road-user traffic laws and other laws dealing with anti-social behaviour. And in general we must say that this works well in most parts of the world.

So whilst that system deals with intra national laws, it also has a profound impact on non-citizens from outside of the Government's administration, and perhaps the best example for this discussion is the immigration laws, particularly when non-citizens wish to permanently live in another country.

Before non-citizens are permitted to have permanent residency in another country they must meet the criteria of the receiving Government. For instance, in most countries serious criminal behaviour is a barrier, as is drugs, collusion with extremist organisations, spying, any history of terrorist activities and even having controversial political and humanist views and opinions. In short, they don't want to buy in more trouble than they already have in home-grown forms.

The foreign citizen issue at hand today in Australia has arisen under Section 44 of the Constitution where those who wish to undertake parliamentary service in the Senate or the House of Representatives must not be a citizen of another country:

Section 44. *Any person who -*

(i.) Is under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience, or adherence to a foreign power, or is a subject or a citizen or entitled to the rights or privileges of a subject or citizen of a foreign power:

Hence they must formally renounce any and all connections with other foreign powers, but as they say in the documentaries, "There is a problem". Whilst some of the Parliament members under scrutiny have either negligently or blatantly flouted this law, there are others who were unaware of their citizenship ties to foreign powers that only came into effect because of the domicile nation pertaining to their parents, and in the case in point, had no reason to suspect they were caught up in Section 44. It is this exact point that is at issue. And to finish it off, the High Court of Australia, which is the highest adjudicator of our laws of this land, has handed down their judgment which in summary is that ignorance (or non-knowledge) of a law (or a breach of it) is no defence against conviction, and therefore most members who have been drawn into the Section 44 ineligibility question have lost their right to be in the Parliament.

It is key to this article that we highlight the High Court's judgement; that even though a person may not be aware that their actions or eligibility fall foul with the law, their Honours ruled (quite correctly in my mind) that none-the-less the law pertaining to eligibility has been broken. And having been found to be

contrary to the law the offending members have been immediately removed from office.

Having now a grasp of the more obvious issues about law and how it applies to our example of Australian citizenship, the Federal Parliament, that is, all of the major political parties that are representative in Parliament, are currently endeavouring to also change the Australian Constitution's meaning of marriage under the Marriage Act. Currently the Marriage Act stipulates that marriage can only occur between a man and a woman, and the thrust of the proposed changes seeks to change the Marriage Act to also include all forms of homosexual couples.

As with all divisive social issues there are those in the community that cannot see a problem with this, citing relationships born out of love should not be constrained to just heterosexual couples and therefore the Marriage Act should reflect this. There is however a barrier for this to occur and that is that marriage is an institution before God between a man and a woman where both shall leave their parents and be joined as one before God. This is not possible for same gender couples engaging in homosexuality.

The Australian Constitution was framed by our forefathers at Federation who wrote into the document a specific reliance on God for the good conduct of government and its performance, and herein is the issue for changing the Marriage Act to be inclusive of any two human beings regardless of their gender. Without any doubt, God rejects all homosexual behaviour calling it an abomination, and we can read several passages from both the Tanakh (the Old Testament) and the Gospels (the New Testament) wherein God has made this very, VERY, clear.

Therefore any proposal to change the Marriage Act to be inclusive of homosexual couples seriously conflicts with the tenets of Christendom and therefore places this proposal well outside of God's abiding will, and accordingly puts it in conflict with the preamble of the Constitution.

Now the arguments for both sides of the question as to whether the Marriage Act should be changed have taken the core issue and buried it under extremist views, sensationalism, fake reporting of facts and just plain propaganda in an attempt to sway the general societal view one way or the other. We have seen questionable attempts to argue that it is an equality issue, we have seen similar attempts to argue that the law of the land should respect all forms of love in human relationships, and we have seen manifestly fake reporting that most Australians support changing the Marriage Act. Even in the early days of

counting of the postal returns there were media outlets reporting that the Yes vote was winning.

But all of this is human vanity. It can be likened to the swirling clouds in a storm that are forever changing, sometimes dark sometimes white. It can be likened to the raging seas with huge crashing waves and foam pounding against the boundary over which they shall not pass. And those who are above these games see the essence of the issue. It is a matter of Law, but not the law of the Constitution's Marriage Act, it is about the law of God.

We can ask the question, "Where has God been relegated to in all of this?" In fact we can ask if anyone in Parliament is seeking God's abiding will on the matter to guide us into understanding the rights and wrongs of the whole issue?

Now as soon as we might discuss God's Law, there will be a plethora of reactionary players that will cry out that the laws of God are now defunct and we are in a period of righteousness by faith in our Lord and Saviour who fulfilled all the laws at his crucifixion. But, "Oh dear", this is not at all correct. It is a convenient mechanism employed by many to excuse their behaviour.

The laws of God can be re-expressed as being disobedience toward His abiding will, about which committed Christians are made aware through God's indwelling Holy Spirit, and, also we have the written Word of God in front of us in the form of the modern day Bible.

This issue of changing the Marriage Act to accommodate homosexually active couples is an excellent example of identifying God's law. And whilst as we have mentioned already there are several places in the scriptures that we can refer to, I have selected perhaps the most expansive passage on the matter that also provides some context.

New Testament Gospels: The Book of Romans Chapter 1 Verses 8 to 32

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

If we were to go back into the older scripts we would find some very blunt passages that simply say that homosexual behaviour is an abomination before God, and in several other passages we see how the residents of Sodom, ie the “homosexual” community of Sodomites, were pushed out and excluded from the lands of Israel.

This leads us to the effect (or penalty) of continuing in disobedience toward God and there are two elements to the judgement. Firstly God will not – in any circumstance, impart His Holy Spirit to homosexual souls, therefore they cannot be considered to have access to the Kingdom of God here on terrestrial earth, and secondly there is no redemption to heaven upon death of a contrary soul. A disobedient homosexual soul on death is bound for destruction.

Of course the same gender couples detest this judgement and rail against its unfairness and its inequality and say that this is wrong because God is a God of love and therefore He will honour the love in these same gender relationships. But don't be fooled by these silly notions. God has a huge capacity for love but He also is very just in how He administrates his laws and how He determines a soul's qualification for entry into His Kingdom.

Do you see that all of a sudden we are looking at laws of citizenship to enter the Kingdom of God. There are barriers, just as there are barriers to entry in our human world today for immigration and for service in Australia's Parliament. Law breakers are excluded from the Kingdom of God and whether these souls know the laws of God or not, whether they think they worship God in churches and they will be accepted into the Kingdom, the example of citizenship that has engulfed our Government in this day exemplifies for all and sundry that it matters not what an individual thinks or professes, if they fall foul of the law they are judged to be ineligible for entry and service.

And so now let us re-consider changing the Marriage Act. Knowing through the law that same gender relationships involving homosexuality are an abomination before God, is it right that we should forsake the Godly institution of marriage between normal male and female couples and force the legislation to accommodate these “ineligible” relationships? We could say the same sort of thing about our ineligible parliamentarians, “Let's just change the law to allow them to stay.” Or perhaps even in relation to a known terrorist or serial criminal seeking to immigrate to Australia. “Let's just let them in anyway”.

This is exactly the purpose of law, and our High Court of Australia has demonstrated for us that the law is the law and it is in place to determine who is eligible and who is not. Clearly, in their minds, their Honours have reinforced the absoluteness of why we have laws in the first place.

I have a sense that the homosexual community are dwelling on the Government to legitimise their behaviour in the eyes of the public through the mechanism of eligibility to marry under the Marriage Act. It is interesting that a large proportion of this community do not profess to be Christian – even shunning any notion of obedience to God yet they wish to be acknowledged as a couple under an institution ordained by God. There are a relatively small number from this community that attend church gatherings and either through ignorance or blatant disobedience demand that they be acknowledged by the other congregants. But despite all of their frothing and all of their cries for legitimism, at the end of the day whilst they are actively involved in a homosexual relationship they are barred from the Kingdom of God both here on terrestrial earth as we have already said and from redemption to heaven at their passing from life.

So returning to our theme, being of foreign citizenship, we see this same problem throughout our history. We have God demonstrably showing us that in ancient times to be a citizen in the commonwealth of Israel the population had to obey all of the 600 plus laws. We again saw in the period of Israel occupying the lands of Canaan that Sodomites failed the citizenship laws because of their abominable behaviour and their unwillingness to cease their way of life. In current times we still have citizenship laws and as we discussed these work to be barriers for those who fail the test, whether they be seeking to emigrate to a new country or enter service with a nation's Government.

All of these laws are a reflection of God's laws that have been carried over from the spiritual realm going back several thousand years. In the cases where unregenerate man may seek to share in all of the benefits and relationship with God he must pass foreign citizenship laws to move from our planet's earthy kingdom into the kingdom of God. The criterion is initially centred around repentance of their disobediences and an undertaking for behavioural modification to achieve compliance, and this is the hurdle where the homosexual community fall over. They wish to have legitimacy in the eyes of God, hence wanting to change the Marriage Act, but because they fail the foreign citizen's test for the Kingdom of God, God will not acknowledge them – and neither should our Government who, according to their charter under the Constitution, are tasked to operate in a manner compliant with the abiding will of God.

It is sad but true and a Christian's role is to spell this out very clearly so that the homosexual community are in no doubt about the error of their ways. To enter into the institution of marriage before God or to be redeemed to heaven at the end of their lives, they must repent of their disobedience and cease the

homosexual nature of their relationships. Without these prerequisites there is no hope for them. As was said, “It is sad but true!”

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