

Rethinking Gay Marriage | Part 1 |

Can everyone be wrong about gay marriage?

If you're wondering if Everyone Can Be Wrong About Gay Marriage, you're probably feeling conflicted between what the Bible says about loving everyone and what it says about gay marriage. I felt the same conflict and I didn't like it. Since our Good GOD isn't our source of confusion, I decided to ask Jesus for His help to understand the conflict. It took Him awhile to unpack everything for me, but it's good stuff and I'd like to share with you what I learned.

An experiment that was done in the 1960s is a foundational building block in understanding what is happening in our community regarding Gay Marriage.

Here's the experiment:

An advertisement was placed in the newspaper for men between 20 and 50 years old. The ad recruited volunteers for a memory study. Men from all levels of society were selected to volunteer for an hour and they were paid the advertised fee when they showed up. Once they arrived, they were informed the study was to determine if people learned better when punishment was involved.

There were three participants in the study:

- 1) The EXAMINER, an expert guide explaining to both men they should do
- 2) The TEACHER, a volunteer asking question and giving corrections to the LEARNER if he answered wrong
- 3) The LEARNER, another volunteer memorizing groups of words & being corrected if he answered simple questions incorrectly.

Both volunteers could see the box that would serve the electric jolts of punishment for wrong answers. It started at 15 volts and went up to 450 volts in 15 volt increments. There were 30 buttons that were segmented into these labeled groups on the box:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1) | Slight Shock | (15 - 60 volts) |
| 2) | Moderate Shock | (75 - 120 volts) |
| 3) | Strong Shock | (135 - 180 volts) |
| 4) | Very Strong Shock | (195 - 240 volts) |
| 5) | Intense Shock | (255 - 300 volts) |
| 6) | Extreme Intensity Shock | (315 - 360 volts) |
| 7) | Danger: Severe Shock | (375 - 420 volts) |
| 8) | X X X | (435 & 450 volts) |

The TEACHER & LEARNER drew pieces of paper from the EXAMINER'S hand to determine which one would be the TEACHER and which would be the LEARNER. They all went into a room next door and the LEARNER was strapped in:

<<LEARNER Strapped In>>

<<TEACHER protesting, but continuing>>

The experiment would end if the TEACHER refused to give any more corrections, or when 450 volts was administered three times regardless of the wishes of the LEARNER.

I have described this experiment from the TEACHER'S Point of View. Stanley Milgram devised this experiment because he had Jewish family members who survived World War 2 atrocities and he was perplexed during the Nuremberg Trials when the Germans claimed 'following orders' as their defense for committing crimes against humanity.

Instead of studying how painful corrections affected learning, the experiment was to test how difficult it was for humans to defy an authority figure. Milgram wanted to see how easily a perceived authority figure could prompt normal people from all walks of life to hurt another human being against their will and for no benefit to themselves. The results are devastating.

<<What the LEARNER was doing in other room>>

The TEACHERS were normal people like you and me. They were not unfeeling monsters. They pushed back, exhibited reluctance, made the shocks as short as they could, demonstrated intense signs of stress, and asked the EXAMINER to check on the LEARNER to see if he was okay. In response, the EXAMINER had set answers to counter all objections. These were simple statements like:

1. Please continue *or* Please go on.
2. The experiment requires that you continue.
3. It is absolutely essential that you continue.
4. You have no other choice; you *must* go on.

There were 2 additional prods if physical injury was asked about:

1. The corrections are painful, but there is no permanent damage, so please go on

2. Whether the LEARNER likes it or not, you must go on until he has learned all the word pairs correctly. So please go on.

If the TEACHER balked at being responsible for hurting the LEARNER, the EXAMINER could say, "I am responsible."

At any time, the TEACHER was free to stop the experiment by refusing to participate any further, but only 14 of the 40 did.

When proposing his experiment, Stanley Milgram's colleagues at Yale were surveyed and they predicted that only 1-3% of TEACHERS would reach all the way to 450 volts. They expected most participants would refuse to proceed between 150-300 volts once they heard the LEARNER'S protests. The results shocked everyone and should cause us concern as well. While the majority of us believe we would never do that to another human being, these experiments have scientifically proven that a majority of would. In one hour, we can be easily encouraged to participate in a crimes against humanity if a guy in a white lab coat tells us to do it & assures us that we won't be held accountable.

While gay marriage is our generation's Milgram Experiment, it isn't our first. Throughout history, humans have all been wrong about slavery, women, blacks, jews, indigenous people, and more.

The main problem is, we can't see the elephant in the room when our entire society is inside the elephant. We are all participating in this generation's Milgram Experiment. Did we continue or did we stop when we heard serious distress and wall pounding coming from the LEARNER community? Did we follow orders or act courageously to protect our LEARNER community? I believe it will benefit all of us to examine how we are contributing or resisting the Milgram experiment we find ourselves in. While all of us have played a role to some extent, what made us so susceptible? More importantly, can we harden our defenses against unjust authority?

Please watch the fifth part in this series to discover what's at stake, it's more important than many realize!

Thank you for listening to Part 01 of Rethinking Gay Marriage. I hope you will join me for Part 02! Until then, keep your eyes on Jesus so you can be wiser than Satan and as harmless as Dovee and may our King Jesus' Force be with you!

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