

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
June 28, 2015+
A Pastoral Statement

Our Lord Jesus Christ said,

“Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” (St. Matthew 19:4-6)

The eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, directs us to creation, where male and female were made so that from then on a man and a woman would hold fast together and the two become one flesh. This is God’s ordering and His design. *He* is the Creator of marriage... the title belongs not to the state, not even the Church. Marriage comes from God Himself. He has put His design into His created order, so that even after the fall into sin, it is still His desire that one man and one woman be united as husband and wife, for a life-long union of fidelity, commitment and the procreation of children. Men and women have been made by God as complimentary human beings so that His gifts of family - husbands, wives, fathers, mothers and children - might be given.

Now our nation has, by judicial fiat, declared that this is not so. Marriage has been falsely redefined so that what God instituted and what nations and kingdoms have recognized since there has been time is rejected, and replaced by something that is inherently disordered, unnatural and contrary to God’s revealed will. Those who hold that marriage is one man and one woman in a lifelong union as husband and wife have already been branded as bigots, full of hatred, standing in the way of equality and against love. However, as the Scriptures say, “love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10) Words such as marriage and love have real meaning, as revealed in the Scriptures, but they have been co-opted, twisted and distorted to be rendered meaningless, even as they have been societally re-defined by the whim of unelected

judges in Washington. To know what love and marriage are, one must look outside of the self, the desires of the flesh and the sinful mind to Christ and His Word, as society and this world will be of no help. The Church now must bring clarity.

Now is not the time for us to be afraid or to be ashamed of what is true and pure and good, or to be silent. Now is the time for watchfulness, prayer and dedication to teaching and confessing clearly the Word and doctrine of our Lord, which stands forever. As the apostle admonishes, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). In this congregation and all confessionally Christian congregations, truth must always abide, no matter the cost. The future cost of confessing what is true is unknown to us today; we are simply to follow our Lord Jesus Christ and abide in His Word. Let us do that together for Jesus’ sake.

Pastor Bestul