Bold Church Initiative

IF THEY SAY…YOU SAY

#1 IF THEY SAY…RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IS JUST A COVER FOR BIGOTRY

You Say… The First Amendment is the foundation of every other right. If the government can tell us what to believe and when and where we can speak and act on those beliefs, we are not truly free. That's why I support religious liberty. It dignifies and protects the beliefs and conscience rights of all people, especially religious and ideological minorities. In this way, religious liberty is a cover or protection from bigotry, not a cover for it. Do you think the government should be able to force you to violate your conscience or sense of right and wrong?

#2 IF THEY SAY…I'M BORN THIS WAY

You Say… I am not questioning that many people innately sense same-sex attraction from an early age. However, a recent scientific study published in *Science* magazine examined the genetics of almost 500,000 people (the largest sample to date) and concluded that there is no "gay gene" that predetermines same-sex behavior. Andrea Ganna, the first author on the study, stated: "Same-sex sexual behavior is…very polygenic, meaning there are a lot of variants that contribute to this trait, and this is very similar to many other behavioral traits."[1] In summary, many sociocultural factors play into same-sex attraction, and this is consistent with what Scripture says on the topic. Did you see that study? What are your thoughts on it?

#3 IF THEY SAY…THE MARRIAGE ISSUE IS SETTLED

You Say…I acknowledge that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. Scripture states that (1) God designed marriage to be a lifelong, exclusive union between a man and woman and that (2) His design is best for human flourishing. Though I recognize the Supreme Court's ruling, I disagree with it. This is not an uncommon position for U.S. citizens. For instance, the U.S. Supreme Court once held that black Americans are not legal persons (*Dread Scott v. Sanford)* and that mentally incapacitated people can be involuntarily sterilized (*Buck v. Bell)*. Fortunately, the Court later reversed these rulings. Is there a Supreme Court ruling that you disagree with?

#4 IF THEY SAY…GENDER IS JUST A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

You say…I have every sympathy for individuals that experience gender dysphoria. And, I acknowledge that gender stereotypes in our culture are not always helpful. But, Christopher Dummitt, [2]one of the early advocates for the idea that gender is fluid and socially constructed,

[1] https://science.sciencemag.org/content/365/6456/eaat7693

[2] https://quillette.com/2019/09/17/i-basically-just-made-it-up-confessions-of-a-social-constructionist/

recently stated: "The problem is: I was wrong. Or, to be a bit more accurate, I got things partly right. But then, for the rest, I basically just made it up." It turns out that the idea that gender is socially constructed is, well, socially constructed. Scripture states that God creates each person as male or female as a reflection of his image and likeness, and our DNA (at the chromosomal level; XX for female and XY for male) determines our gender. Though I deeply care about every individual's feelings and sense of well-being, I believe that the best and most loving message to any person is this: gender is a fixed biological reality. What do you think about Dummitt's article?

#5 If They Say…You're on The Wrong Side of History

Just give them a history book (especially a history book on World War 2) and laugh. Actually, don't. You say...If you mean by that phrase that the cultural majority is moving in the same ideological direction and I should follow them, the same argument could have been used in Nazi Germany to justify the Holocaust and in the Jim Crow South to justify systemic racism. So, the goal is not to be on the right side of history. Rather, it is simply to be right—to pursue what is true and what is best for me and my neighbor. Based on Scripture, I believe that several developments in American society are detrimental to individuals and to human flourishing generally. Do you agree that we should pursue what is best for our communities?

#6 If They Say…The Church Is Anti-Gay

You Say…I acknowledge that the church has not always treated the LGBTQ community with compassion and respect. Scripture states that every person is of equal dignity and worth and that every person should be treated with love and respect, and we have not always lived that out in a consistent way. But, it is important to note that disagreement is not disrespect. The opposite of love is not hate; rather, it is indifference. Though it would be much easier for me to stay silent on this issue, I believe that what is best for me and for society generally is to follow God's good design for human sexuality (lifelong, exclusive, heterosexual marriage). That's why I speak up. I believe that this sexual ethic is not just true, but good—good for me and for everyone else. Though we may disagree on this issue, please understand my motivation. I want what is best for my neighbors. Let me ask you this. Given the current state of the American family, do you think the broader sexual revolution has been a net good for our society?

Bold Church Initiative is a ministry that equips the church to confidently live out the gospel in public life.

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