

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for conducting this inquiry and allowing me the opportunity to contribute.

I sincerely hope that the result of this inquiry will result in marriage equality, for all regardless of gender.

I find it incredible that so many religious organisations and people who consider themselves to be religious have devoted so much time to try and prevent this. It constantly amuses me that they will cite either religious reasons or societal custom as justification for their bigotry in this regard. The truly amazing thing is that they will deliberately disregard portions of their religious texts that they believe are of no importance and elevate other parts into a crusade, such as if you believe the bible, Jesus specifically forbids divorce but does not only sanction slavery but actually goes so far as to specify how hard you should beat a slave! Funnily enough I have yet to see one of these people protest outside the family court, reminding all that Jesus forbade divorce or hear them submitting letters to their local member asking for permission to keep slaves. Furthermore, I am certain that all of them have eaten prawns or other shellfish, and at some stage worn a polyester cotton shirt, both actions specifically prohibited by the bible.

After disregarding any religious basis for prohibiting same sex marriage, all I can see are the benefits that allowing these unions will bring for all of society. When you see the countries and states overseas that have allowed same sex marriage, there has been no detriment to anyone and has just brought more people to be fully functioning members of society.

One of the issues that has concerned me all my life has been the absolute tragedy of youth suicide. Repeated studies have shown that gay and lesbian youths suicide at a rate three times higher than the remainder of the population. This is hardly surprising, if not disgusting, when you see the discrimination still faced by these members of the action of the religious hypocrites and others in society. By showing these young gay and lesbian youths that they are entitled to the same rights, responsibilities and respect as the rest of society, this will go a long way to addressing the problem of youth suicide.

Once again, I truly hope that the outcome of this inquiry will result in marriage equality for all of society, not just a privileged institution and status in society for some. In today's Australia, discrimination such as that of marriage equality would not be tolerated by any other ethnic, religious or other group yet gays and lesbians are expected to abide by the discriminatory laws yet be bared for so many aspects of life due to the amendments of the marriage act in 2004.

Yours faithfully,

Graeme Moffatt