CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

The registration of civil partnerships

Question 1  (Paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13)
Do you agree that legislation should be changed so that civil partnerships could be registered through religious ceremonies?

Yes  ☐
No  ☒
Don’t know  ☐

Please give reasons for your answer.

Comments
We believe strongly that civil partnerships should not exist in the first place. They only exist to provide for homosexual relationships, and do not give the same rights to heterosexual relationships. They are discriminatory, but of greater import – they are unholy. Only marriage is allowable in the sight of God, and that between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:4)

There is a suggestion in this question that the prerogative of the Government is to interfere in matters of the church. Legally, the state has no jurisdiction to interfere within the sphere of the church (Treaty of Union).

A religious ceremony would be a ‘mockery’ of what cannot take place according to Scripture.

Question 2  (Paragraphs 2.14 to 2.19)
Do you think that the proposals in England and Wales on registration of civil partnerships in religious premises would be appropriate for Scotland?

Yes  ☐
No  ☒
Don’t know  ☐

If you have answered no, please explain what elements of the proposals in England and Wales you consider inappropriate for Scotland.

Comments
There should be no use of religious premises for something which claims to be civil. The very nature of civil partnerships are anti-Christian and anti-Biblical, therefore a ceremony in religious premises would be an absurdity. The government does not wish to be influenced by the Bible but ironically
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3  (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in religious premises?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes □</td>
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<tr>
<td>No ☒</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know □</td>
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Please give reasons for your answer

**Comments**
Civil ceremonies and religious ceremonies must be keep separate. This proposal blurs the lines of demarcation, and leaves religious celebrants who refuse such registration open to abuse and sectarianism for not doing so. Why is the government opening the doors to intolerance towards religious bodies and sectarian abuse?

Civil magistrates have a responsibility to act according to the law of God, and will be held accountable for not doing so.

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<th>Question 4  (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in other places agreed between the celebrant and the couple?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes □</td>
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<tr>
<td>No ☒</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know □</td>
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Please give reasons for your answer

**Comments**
No.
This will lead, over time, to coercion on religious celebrants. These are civil partnerships and have no place in the call of a minister of religion. Deplorably, the government is asking ministers to contravene their ordination vows by undermining the teaching of Scripture.

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<th>Question 5  (Paragraph 2.25)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes ☒</td>
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<tr>
<td>No □</td>
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</table>
Don’t know □

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Yes. The business of the state is to manage the state. The business of the church, the things of the church. Whether or not the government requires religious bodies to register such partnerships, this Kirk Session will not accept such an anti-Biblical, anti-Christian, and discriminatory request. It contravenes the Scripture and our human rights in law.

The state would be acting beyond its power. We all have a higher power.

Question 6 (Paragraphs 2.26 and 2.27)

Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to register civil partnerships if their religious body has decided against registering civil partnerships?

Yes ☒

No □

Don’t know □

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

While certainly these are civil matters, not religious, and consequently religious celebrants should not be allowed to register such partnerships, nevertheless such a separation of powers will not absolve the government of its accountability before God for enacting that which is contrary to His will.

These proposals are likely to lead to disharmony within, and between, religious denominations. These proposals are anti-social, as well as anti-Christian.

Question 7 (Paragraphs 2.28 to 2.30)

Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to register civil partnerships?

Yes ☒

No □

Don’t know □

Please give reasons for your answer
Comments
The State is attempting to interfere with religion and with churches. That was the reason for the Disruption in 1843. The Christian religion cannot recognise Civil partnerships, or any relationship based on homosexuality, and therefore it would be a gross abuse of human rights, freedom of belief, and a draconian imposition more akin to a dictatorship and a banana republic than to a so called free country if it did.

Question 8 (Paragraphs 2.31 to 2.35)
Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to register civil partnerships against their will?

Do you favour:

Option 1  ☐
Option 2  ☐
Neither  ☒

If you have another option, please describe it.

Comments
Both options are equally wrong. The First option attempts to equate civil partnerships with marriage – at best they are only a ‘mock’ marriage, and we urge the government to repeal the law, and reverse a perversity. The Second option compounds the situation by involving a religious celebrant.

If the government is attempting to avoid coercion, then it has two choices: 1) Abolish civil partnerships completely; 2) keep such partnerships totally civil. We advocate the repeal of the law on civil partnerships, which are following out of favour anyway, and by such abolition the government would also avoid religious coercion.

Question 9 (Paragraphs 2.36 to 2.40)
Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to register civil partnerships. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

Yes  ☐
No  ☒
Don’t know  ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
There should be no legislation needed to protect religious bodies in a free society. However, it appears that aggressive and vociferous minorities,
attempting to cover their ‘unnaturalness’ (Romans 1) would attempt to claim discrimination if prevented from holding such ceremonies, and weak, nominal church bodies and ‘celebrants’ would use the fear of a charge of discrimination as an excuse to capitulate. This would lead to disruption and disunity within, and between, denominations. Legal protection is needed.
Questions (Paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12)

Do you agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow same sex marriage?

Yes [ ]
No [x]
Don’t know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
Certainly not.
There is a false distinction made between civil and religious marriage in the consultation document. Marriage is not an inherently religious concept, although it is found in Creation (Genesis 2:4) – and is there defined as existing between a man and a woman. Its institution is primarily for ‘companionship’ and secondarily for procreation. These twin facets are part of nature and instinct, and as such ‘marriage’ has been enshrined in ‘The Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ (Article 16) as existing between ‘men and women’ only.

Will a same sex marriage fulfil this? A ‘mock’ ceremony will not make the impossible possible, or the ‘unnatural’ natural, or the ‘vile affection’ anything other than what the Bible says it is (Romans 1:26, 27). These are life style choices, and such choices should not necessitate marriage re-definition.

Of course, in a politically-correct drive to have ‘equality,’ the government lays itself open to discriminatory legislation still. When the Canadian government legislated for such so-called ‘marriages’ did it believe it would be challenged by a polygamist? What about those who would believe in tripartite ‘marriage’? Where does the list end on the ‘equality’ agenda? It is insatiable.

Recent polls suggest that these proposals do not have the support suggested by the government. Recent statistics demonstrate a fall in civil partnerships.

Because of these proposals and polls which suggest that there is not widespread unanimity for same sex ‘marriage,’ coupled with the potential discrimination against heterosexual couples in being denied civil partnerships – and the added cost to the tax-payer if civil partnerships are deemed illegal, and need to be available to heterosexuals – the Scottish government is pandering to a very small minority while 75% of the Scottish people still claim to be ‘Christian.’

The government has no right to redefine an institution which pre-exists the institution of the state. The roll of government is to provide all supports
necessary to promote and accommodate marriage as it already exists.

Sadly, the government has, in this process, disregarded not only the institution of marriage, but it makes no attempt to draw into this consultation process the affects this would have on families – for example, what is the impact on children? When will children be taught about same-sex marriages? At 4 years old? At 5 years old? What rights will parents have to withdraw their children from this kind of perverse education? Or is the government not going to educate? Or have they not thought this far ahead?

God has said marriage exists between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24) for companionship and procreation; and that same sex marriage would be an encouragement of the ‘vile affectionʼ (Romans 1:26, 27).

We see hope even in desperate situations which this consultation is trying to rectify, but not in same sex ‘marriage.’ It is the gospel which declares that Christ can forgive sin, and ‘all have sinned’ (Romans 3). The Apostle Paul when writing to Corinth where homosexuality existed, did not propose same sex marriage but taught repentance (a turning away from sin, and turning towards God) and faith in Jesus Christ, so that many turned to Paul’s Saviour, so that he could speak of their sin in the past tense: ‘And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God’. (1 Cor. 6:11). We still teach this same message today.

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<th>Question 11  (Paragraph 3.13)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do you agree that religious bodies and celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
To require them to do so would be a violation of their basic human rights, and freedom of speech and opinion.

This question proceeds on the premise that same sex marriage can exist in legislation; legislation cannot make the impossible, possible.

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<th>Question 12  (Paragraphs 3.14 to 3.18)</th>
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<td>Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex civil marriage only?</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
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We categorically state that marriage is between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:4 et al), and cannot be made to be otherwise by an Act of Parliament. To speak of a ‘civil’ marriage is to introduce two tiers of marriage.

Such ‘civil’ marriages would discriminate also against Registrars who could not engage in such charades. They would face discrimination, and in order to protect their jobs would be coerced.

Question 13 (Paragraph 3.19)
Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex marriage, both religious and civil?
Yes ☐ No ☒ Don’t know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
We strongly oppose same sex ‘marriage,’ whether civil or religious. Small religious minorities who want to compromise in order to keep all adherents possible will advocate ‘same sex marriage’ in religious institutions. This will lead to instability, disharmony, and discrimination within some religious bodies.

At a future date, with perhaps many countries legalising ‘same sex marriages,’ the European Court of Human Rights may rule that religious ceremonies are mandatory, if so desired.

The Scottish government has forgotten that equality law is a reserved matter.

Question 14 (Paragraphs 3.23 and 3.24)
Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?
Yes ☒ No ☐ Don’t know ☐
This question is breathtakingly bizarre, potentially draconian, and sows the seed of discrimination. Has the government thought of its position in an overwhelming ‘No’ response? Would it impose same-sex marriage ceremonies on ministers and churches whose conscience would forbid them from doing so? Or would the government disregard the response? The government is on the horns of a dilemma – a rejected consultation or an avowed abuse of human rights!

There is to be no interference by the state in matters religious.

**Question 15  (Paragraphs 3.25 and 3.26)**

Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to solemnise same sex marriages if their religious body has decided against solemnising same sex marriage?

- Yes  ☒
- No  ☐
- Don’t know  ☐

**Comments**

Of course.

To coerce and intimidate ministers into acting contrary to their conscience and ordination vows would be a violation of their liberty, and their calling by God.

They are not in a position to solemnise what God has forbidden. Any ceremony engaged in would be a charade, a fraud, a worthless pantomime, and a waste of time. It would send a false message and a false hope – namely that God approves of something, which He has forbidden in His word.

**Question 16  (Paragraphs 3.27 and 3.28)**

Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

- Yes  ☒
- No  ☐
- Don’t know  ☐

**Comments**
How can there be a requirement on someone against their will? Successive court rulings demonstrate that the a minister is not employed by a church but by God Himself. Shamefully, government has not protected those workers – registrars – whose religious conviction prevented them from registering the civil partnerships, and we suspect the government will abandon its responsibility to the ministers of 75% of the population who claim to be Christian.

Nevertheless, ministers should not be required to solemnise what they are forbidden to solemnise in Scripture. Such a ceremony would be a worthless fraud.

To force ministers to do so would be a blatant infringement of religious freedom.

Question 17  (Paragraphs 3.29 to 3.33)

Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to solemnise same sex marriage against their will?

Do you favour:
Option 1
Option 2
Neither
Don’t know

Please give reasons for your answer and if you have another option, please describe it.

Comments
Neither of these options is acceptable to us as a body of Christians. Option 1 suggests that marriage can be redefined; it can not. Option 2 promotes two levels of ‘celebrant,’ which contradicts the warning given in paragraph 3.25 about the need to avoid interfering with the cohesion of religious bodies.

There will be no religious coercion by not permitting so-called ‘same sex marriages.’

Question 18 (Paragraphs 3.34 to 3.39)

Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to solemnise same sex marriage. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?

Yes
No
Don’t know
While it is a truism that no premises may be used without the owner’s permission, there is a wide-spread fear that religious bodies will be intimidated by government, by discrimination legislation, and by cries of ‘homophobia,’ to opt for the easy life. Those with true Christian convictions will resist, but for the protection of the weaker Christian we seek legislation to give protection.

Question 19  (Paragraph 3.41)

If Scotland should introduce same-sex marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?

Yes ☐
No ☐
Don’t know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
This is a very poor question; it will result in a confused poll, and really should be disregarded.

The only way ‘Scotland’ can be said to introduce ‘same sex marriage’ is by a vote of the Scottish people. There should be a referendum on this issue, and let ‘Scotland’ decide. What this question should have asked is: If the Scottish government [sic] should introduce [same-sex] marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?

There is an implicit suggestion that ‘civil partnerships’ are viewed as an incongruity. As they stand, we seek their repeal; and we reject the notion of a ‘same sex marriage.’

We therefore are prevented from answering this question by the skewed nature of this consultation.

Question 20  (Paragraph 4.19)

Do you have any other comments?

Yes ☒
No ☐

We are particularly interested in your views on:
• potential implications of the proposals for transgender people (paragraph 3.42)
• possible transitional arrangements (paragraphs 3.43 and 3.44);
• recognition of Scottish same sex marriages elsewhere (paragraphs 3.45 to 3.49);
• any comments on forced marriage (paragraphs 3.51 and 3.52)
• any comments on sham marriage (paragraph 3.53)
• potential financial implications (paragraphs 4.01 to 4.08);
• potential equality implications (paragraphs 4.09 to 4.14).

Comments

The proposals for ‘same sex marriage’ equates to a ‘sham marriage’ because it is baseless in Scripture, in nature, and in logic. How can it provide a father and a mother for children? Indeed, how can it provide, naturally, children?

Cost:
It has been estimated that the cost of such ill-advised proposals could cost up to £5bn UK wide. This figure takes into account what will happen in the event of a successful legal challenge by a heterosexual couple to the government’s legalising ‘same sex marriage’ whilst simultaneously providing for the continuance of ‘civil partnerships’ for homosexuals only. Why has the government not told the Scottish people the entire cost?

The Consultation Itself:
We believe that the proper way to have a consultation with the Scottish people is by way of referendum. We therefore call for a Referendum on ‘same sex marriages.’

The questions here were often presumptive of ‘same sex marriages’ or the acceptability of ‘civil partnerships’ and did not always allow for freedom to express disapproval of both aberrations in the formalising of relationships (cf. comments on Q.19)

The Government’s self-view is alarming:

(a) The government is appallingly arrogant by believing it can legislate for that which is contrary to nature, and define that which pre-dates the nation-state.

(b) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not permit ‘same sex marriage’ (Article 16)

(c) The government is attempting to interfere in religious bodies, something which is contrary to the Act of Union:

…And further Her Majesty with advice foresaid expressly
Declares and Statutes That none of the Subjects of this Kingdom shall be liable to but all and every one of them for ever free of any Oath Test or Subscription within this Kingdom contrary to or inconsistent with the foresaid true Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government Worship and Discipline as above established And that the same within the bounds of this Church and Kingdom shall never be imposed upon or required of them in any sort… (Cf. Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Act (1707)).

Should the Law change:
We will act according to the Scripture. The church’s standing is on the basis of Scripture, and not vice versa; therefore, if we cease to be scriptural we are no longer a church.

We would refuse to solemnise any ‘same sex marriage,’ and refuse to be liable for any fines levied, and would see imprisonment for the cause of truth an honourable and worthy course of action.

A Biblical warning to Government:

The government has no right to impose such laws upon a free people, nor has she the right to request that of ministers which they have no right to give. The Westminster Confession of Faith which binds all Presbyterians says of marriage:

\[
\text{Marriage is to be between one man and one woman…[it is] for the increase of mankind with legitimate issue (WCF, XXIV:1,2)}
\]

Should this government enact and legislate for ‘same sex marriage,’ it will bring divine judgment and reproof upon our people: ‘Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people’ (Prov. 13:34). There is a responsibility placed upon government, the ‘civil magistrate’ to enact that which is to the wellbeing of true religion.

\[
\text{The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven… (WCF, XXIII.3)}
\]

In supporting the ‘civil magistrate’ in being ‘over the people, for his [God’s] own glory, and the public good’ (ibid., 1), we will support the magistrate in whatever way possible in his abandoning the aberration of ‘same sex marriage’ and the repealing of ‘civil partnerships.’

We have grave reservations about the legitimacy of this Consultation, and about any imagined, vague protection which may be given to religious bodies in the future.