



THE CHURCH COALITION FOR THE BIBLE AND CONFESSION

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Statement from the Coalition for the Bible and the Confession on the Proposal for a new Order of Marriage for the Church of Sweden

The Governing Body of the Church of Sweden proposes that the Church of Sweden General Synod should adopt an order of marriage that allows two people of the same sex to contract a marriage in the church. In this way the Church of Sweden will adapt its teaching to the values that constitute the majority view in the Swedish parliament (Riksdagen).

This is actually not surprising. The Church of Sweden is permeated by the same political parties that constitute the parliament. The majority of the members of the Church of Sweden Governing Body have party labels, as have those who are members of the Church of Sweden General Synod, and they usually follow their party lines on decisive issues. Theology has been transformed into an ideology and the church's own institutions happily provide theological post-constructions to the latest opinions and whims of the world.

For the church, this is devastating. The faith, confession and teaching of the Church of Sweden can never rest on political majorities or on the currently fancy views of the world, but only on the revealed Word of God and on the confessional foundation that over the centuries have been formulated in the confessional documents of the church.

The decision now taken by the Church of Sweden Governing Body shows that those who have power in the Church of Sweden are effectively cutting off the church from its roots. The Church of Sweden will now be transformed into a congregational denomination, whose teaching is formulated by simple majority decisions, and where the Bible is being used arbitrarily or even entirely removed in order to legitimize the decisions taken.

A small denomination in the North now chooses its own way and redefines the teaching about marriage that the universal church has given up until now, supported by God's good order in creation and which is revealed through the word of the Bible and confirmed by the confession of the church. Those who have power in the Church of Sweden have chosen a dangerous road and they now run the risk of leading her out into complete ecumenical isolation.

The issue has however yet another dimension. For each and every one who wants to stand firm on the foundation of the traditional teaching, the matter is not brought to a head, whether or not the Church of Sweden is still a useful tool for God when His word is reinterpreted and, as the Archbishop of Uppsala recently put it, "extended" and given an entirely new meaning. I therefore appeal to everyone for perseverance in prayer that the members of the Church of Sweden General Synod may come to their senses. Contact them, write letters to them, appeal to them and exhort them! Write to the Archbishop and to the Bishops!

The next few weeks and months will be crucial in many ways. There are many signs that the current church system is being eroded and is falling apart through a rapid loss of substance. Do we really appreciate that all that we possess and still have, we only have by the grace of God? It is in the power of God to break down and to build up whatever He has planted. God's possibilities are not exhausted. He will show us what we should do if the situation becomes untenable.

"Watch over the flock to make sure that nobody goes astray from the grace of God and that no bitter root will make shoots and become a devastation that affects many" (Hebr 12:15).

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Translation: Sr Gerd Swensson, Te Deum