How would you characterise your views on the Bill in general?

In opposition

How would you characterise your views on the introduction of same sex marriage, so that same sex couples can marry each other?

In opposition

Marriage has always been more than marking love between two people, but the foundational unit of society that provides a loving and secure environment for the raising of children that come from that union. This legislation fundamentally redefines the nature of marriage to focus simply on the rights of individuals and undermines this societal unit that will further bring harm to our society. There is no need to legislate for how people love each other and there is no increased benefit legally to introduce same sex marriage on top of current civil partnership arrangements.

How would you characterise your views on putting belief celebrants on the same footing as religious celebrants?

How would you characterise your views on the arrangements for authorising celebrants to solemnise opposite sex and same sex marriage (including the opt-in procedures)?

How would you characterise your views on civil partnerships changing to marriages?

In opposition

How would you characterise your views on allowing civil marriage ceremonies to take place anywhere, other than religious premises, agreed between the couple and registrar?

How would you characterise your views on allowing the religious and belief registration of civil partnerships?

In opposition
How would you characterise your views on allowing transgender persons to stay married when obtaining a full Gender Recognition Certificate, which provides legal recognition in the acquired gender?

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of protections for those in society who may have concerns about same sex marriage?

There will be many people who will not be able to accept the whole idea of same sex marriage. My fear is that those who hold to traditional marriage by conscience will be discriminated against within society. I fear as a pastor of a church that the day will come when people will seek to take legal action against us a church that will only conduct marriages between people of the opposite sex. I fear that many of my church members will find it increasingly difficult to be considered as suitable foster carers and adopters of children. Thus those who could do much good to some of the most disadvantaged in society could be prevented from doing so. I fear that people who hold to traditional marriage will find it increasingly difficult to be accepted as social workers and teachers because they cannot accept this redefinition. During the introduction of abortion, conscience clauses were added for those who ethically could not participate in such procedures. Could such conscience clauses not be introduced into this bill if it should go ahead?

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of freedom of speech?

As a minister of a large evangelical congregation in the city centre I am concerned that courteous disagreement to the acceptance of same sex marriage will one day face legal challenge. I am bound to preach the ethics of the bible that calls all sexual activity outside traditional marriage, of whatever type, as sinful. The bible says that we are all sinners and yet there is the offer of forgiveness in the gospel of Jesus Christ for all who repent and believe. I am concerned that my freedom of speech, as a preacher of the Bible will be under attack by this legislation and that in addition the charitable status of our congregation would be put under threat for not toeing the political line of this proposed change to Scottish life.

Would you like to comment on any other wider issues in relation to the Bill that are not mentioned above?

Are you responding as...

a faith/belief-based organisation

Paul Rees
Charlotte Baptist Chapel
22 August 2013