



News Release

1 August 2006
5pm For immediate release.

Clergy should not enter into Civil Partnerships

The report that Jeffrey John, Dean of St. Albans, has apparently entered into a Civil Partnership highlights the absurdity of the Church of England's view of such partnerships.

Last year the House of Bishops issued guidelines permitting clergy to enter into a Civil Partnerships on condition that they give "assurances that their relationship will be consistent with the teaching set out in *Issues in Human Sexuality*". This means that they must be and continue to be celibate. (We presume that Dr John gave such assurances if he has entered into a CP.)

However, by allowing clergy to enter Civil Partnerships the Bishops have encouraged something which is a counterfeit of true marriage and which undermines the Biblical teaching which Christians follow (see for example Romans chapter 1).

In recent years Church of England reports, including the Bishops Guidelines, have persistently focused on sexual practice whilst largely ignoring what clergy teach. It would appear that a clergyman cannot engage in homosexual sex but he or she can encourage others to do so, which is deeply hypocritical. The Bible says that those who teach will be more strictly judged (James chapter 3 verse 1).

Church Society has stated consistently that those who teach that homosexual practice is acceptable should not be in ordained ministry in the Church of England. We have also called on the Bishops to rescind their guidelines and reject civil partnerships as contrary to Christian teaching.

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Church Society exists to uphold biblical teaching and to promote and defend the character of the Church of England as a reformed and national Church.

For information about Civil Partnerships and the Bishops Statement see:

http://www.churchsociety.org/issues_new/ethics/civpart/iss_ethics_civpart_intro.asp

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