

Annual General Meeting

Special Resolution at October Annual General Meeting

MOTION: Adoption of Amendments to the PAOC Positions and Practices

WHEREAS CLA, as a member of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, we align our Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truth / Positions and Practices in our Constitution and By-Laws;

WHEREAS the PAOC, through its General Conference, has reviewed, researched, and debated certain provisions of its General Constitution and By-Laws and its Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths / Positions and Practices, and has adopted the following amendments:

6.1 MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marriage is a provision of God wherein one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others enter into a lifelong relationship[1] through a marriage ceremony that is recognized by the church and legally sanctioned by the state.

Marriage establishes a “one-flesh” **covenantal** relationship[2] that goes beyond a physical union and is more than either a temporary relationship of convenience intended to provide personal pleasure or a contract that binds two people together in a legal partnership. Marriage establishes an emotional and spiritual oneness that enables both partners to respond to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the other.[3] It provides the biblical context for the procreation of children.

Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship that is maintained in purity.[4] It is intended by God to be a permanent relationship. It is a witness to the world of the relationship between Christ and His church.[5]

Marriage requires a commitment of love, perseverance and faith. Because of its sanctity and permanence, marriage should be treated with seriousness and entered into only after counsel and prayer for God's guidance. Christians should marry only those who are believers.[6] An individual who becomes a believer after marriage should remain with his/her partner in peace, and should give witness to the Gospel in the home.[7]

The Bible holds family life as a position of trust and responsibility. The home is a stabilizing force in society, a place of nurture, counsel, and safety for children.[8]

~~Marriage can only be broken by porneia, which is understood as marital unfaithfulness[9] involving adultery, homosexuality, or incest. While the Scriptures give evidence that the marriage vow and “one-flesh” union are broken by such acts and therefore recognize the breaking of the marriage relationship, the Scriptures do recommend that the most desirable option would be reconciliation.[10]~~

6.2 DIVORCE

We believe that divorce is not God's intention. ~~It is God's~~ **but a** concession **“because your hearts were hard.”** ~~to the “hardness of men's hearts.”~~ [11]

We, therefore, discourage divorce ~~by all lawful means and teaching.~~ Our objective is reconciliation and the healing of the marital union wherever possible. ~~Marital unfaithfulness should not be considered so~~

~~much an occasion or opportunity for divorce but rather an opportunity for Christian grace, forgiveness, and restoration.~~ Divorce in our society is a termination of a marriage through a legal process authorized by the State. While the Church recognizes this legal process as an appropriate means to facilitate the permanent separation of spouses, ~~the Church we~~ restricts the idea of divorce, in the sense of dissolution of marriage, to reasons ~~specified~~ supported in Scripture: marital unfaithfulness[12], pre-conversion divorce[13], the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever[14], or domestic abuse by a spouse, toward a spouse or child[15].

The ~~weight of the~~ biblical record includes evidence that God hates the violence associated with divorce: ~~is negative and the explicit statement is made, "God hates divorce. "The man who hates and divorces his wife" says the LORD, the God of Israel, "does violence to the one he should protect," says the LORD Almighty.~~[16] Divorce is more than an action of the courts which breaks the legal contract between partners in a marriage. It is also the fracture of a unique human relationship between a male and a female. Divorce has profound consequences for the children. ~~Divorce is evidence of the sinful nature expressed in human failure. Jesus gives one explicit cause for the dissolution of marriage: porneia or marital unfaithfulness.~~

Where all attempts at reconciliation have failed and a divorce has been finalized, we extend Christ's love and compassion.

6.3 REMARRIAGE

Remarriage is the union of one man and one woman, legally sanctioned by the State, ~~of one man and one woman~~, one or both of whom have been previously married. ~~It is regarded as acceptable in Scripture in the event of the death of a former spouse. It is also regarded as acceptable if there has been sexual immorality on the part of the former partner or if the former partner has remarried.~~

[1] Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6

[2] Matt 19:5; Mal 2:15

[3] Gen 2:18; 1Cor 7:2-5; Heb 13:4

[4] Eph 5:3, 26-27

[5] Eph 5:25, 31-32

[6] 2Cor 6:1, 14-15

[7] 1Cor 7:12-14, 16

[8] Eph 6:4

~~[9] Matt 5:32; 19:9~~

~~[10] Eph 4:32~~

[11] Matt 19:8

[12] Matt 19:9

[13] 2 Cor 5:17

[14] 1 Cor 7:10-15

[15] Matt 18:6; Eph 5:28-33; Col 3:19

[16] Mal 2:16

WHEREAS these amendments have been duly ratified through the PAOC's constitutional process and communicated to member churches for adoption;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the membership of CLA hereby accepts and adopts the above-noted amendments to the PAOC Positions and Practices, and authorizes the Board to incorporate such amendments into the church's governing documents as required to maintain conformity with the PAOC.