



**BIBLE  
SOCIETY**

1817-2017

***“Take note of this: everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry”. James 1:19***

*We were asked by Coopers to remove the original Bible Society “Keeping it Light” video and out of respect we have done so. As we have had so many requests for the contents of this video since then, please find the transcript below.*

*All references to Cooper’s have been removed from this transcript.*

*Welcome to keeping it light a place where we can have a light discussion about a very heavy topic in this case, same-sex marriage with two of the great opponents on this debate Mr Andrew Hastie and Mr Tim Wilson both members of parliament. It's all made possible by the Bible Society who have been "Keeping it Light" for 200 years. Andrew, you're a Bible reading Christian aren't you morally required to, you know, hate Tim?*

**M**

*Absolutely not.  
I'm commanded to love my neighbour. As a colleague to Tim I sit next to him in parliament and as a friend.*

**A**

*Right.  
Ok so nothing very dramatic there.  
Look Tim, you are a respected thought leader you're a gay man and, am I right, you're an atheist?  
At the moment?*

**M**

*I'm more of an agnostic actually.  
But I prefer to say that I haven't found God but I'm on a journey and I may one day find him.*

**T**

*You may indeed!  
Today could be the turning point.*

**M**

*It could! but although...\*laughs\**

**T**

*Well let's not put too much pressure.*

**M**

*Now I would agree with that.*

**T**

*But aren't you in danger of becoming a red-necked fundamentalist simply by sitting next to Andrew in parliament?*

**M**

*I don't think so. Firstly he doesn't have red-neck views You can disagree without being disagreeable you can come to common positions, or differing positions and recognise that they are legitimate and they're deeply held.*

**T**

*Well Tim has of course just articulated the very vision of liberal democracy that I think was held by the likes of Edmund Burke, one of the often Bible readers might I say, who may well have read Bible verses like this "My dear brothers take note of this: everyone should be quick to listen slow to speak and slow to become angry." Let's test it out.*

**M**

*I think I'm going to start a fair few speeches with that in the future. There you go and Bible quotes.*

**T**

*You should! The more the better.*

**M**

*That's right.  
Well let's get into it. Now for each of you, what is your fundamental belief about marriage?*

**M**

*Well I believe it would be sensible to change the Act that deals with the issues around civil marriage to include two people regardless of their gender. I hold that view because I believe everybody should be encouraged to have an equal investment in society, that relationships should be recognised as marriage if they're long term and committed because they provide the foundations of a society going from the individual, to forming family, building community and ultimately country. That's how we make a strong country. And whether people are heterosexual or homosexual we should want people committed to that.*

**T**

*Andrew that doesn't leave much room to move.  
Essentially you are a homophobe uh..  
Does that sort of more or less sum up your position?*

**M**

**T** *\*Tim laughs\* He just told me that he loved me! I don't think that's quite right.*

*Ok I'm sorry, I should be fair.*

**M**

*Uh tell us tell us your position on marriage*

**M**

*Well Tim and I obviously disagree on this issue  
I'm for retaining the current definition of marriage  
which is between a man and a woman.  
I hold to a common view of marriage,  
common throughout culture and history  
and that is that it's a comprehensive union  
between a man and a woman.  
It's equal and it's diverse - it's got both genders  
and I think it's a institution that's grown up  
organically prior to politics, and so my view is that  
the State shouldn't be redefining something  
that exist prior to the State. Exactly.  
And so my view is that we should tread lightly there.  
That's not to say that Tim & Ryan his partner  
shouldn't be afforded the same rights  
before the law as a married couple.  
I just think the definition is distinct and important.*

**A**

*You're clearly not gonna agree so  
what's the point of going on with the discussion?*

**M**

**T**

*Well I think there is value in going on with any discussion even when you disagree.  
Firstly because, if you want to take a country forward everybody has to have an equal investment in it's future, and they have to feel that they've been heard and their wishes respected because we always have inconsistent positions but I don't believe that the concerns Andrew's raising should be thrown out or discarded because I think there is some merit around it. Aspects of or components of it and areas where we find common agreement.*

*Now we get to the hard part. I'm going to see if he has actually listened to anything at all.*

**M**

*Oh here we go.*

**A**

*and if he can articulate your position*

**M**

*\*to Andrew\* Go on.  
What is Tim's position?*

**M**

*So Tim's position, as I understand it, is that rather than creating a new institution we should incorporate and extend the benefits of marriage to all couples, regardless of gender, or sexuality, and so that includes Tim and Ryan, and other gay couples that would like to get married.  
That's why I understand it. It's an institution that is at the bedrock of our community and so to exclude others from that institution it diminishes their rights before the law.*

**A**

*Would you say that's actually the one that makes you go "Actually, I'll have to think about that"?*

**M**

*I would say it has a lot of emotional ballast.*



*Tim, tell us the moment you've been listening to Andrew and gone "Oooo"*



*What is Andrew's most compelling argument? The most compelling argument is the conservative dimension to it which is you have an institution that predates the State and we have created a legal framework of course through the constitution about how laws around marriage are defined. It pre-dates the State and the State shouldn't come along and redefine or re-clarify how an institution operates.*



*What's happening with our public discourse, and how do we change it?*



*I think there's a lack of public virtue now and so a virtue is to listen. And I don't think people are exercising that enough and we're quick to condemn, we're very quick to judge. We're reflexively hateful of our opposition and I think that all comes back down to personal virtue.*



*The question is why are we not doing this more often? I mean the parliament is a place where people have massive arguments here we're having a conversation. and listening to each other.*



*Exactly. It's good.*



*How do you feel about it? A bit weird?*



*No I think it's great! I enjoy good debate, good conversation, good company.*



*Would Q&A be better if they began with a reading from say the Epistle of James.*



*I think anything would make Q&A better so the answer is yes.*



*Well I just wanted to say thank you to Tim Wilson and Andrew Hastie Can we just raise a glass to the Bible Society and say Happy Birthday Bible Society.*



*Happy Birthday Bible Society*



*200 years!*

