



# Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

24 August 2011

## **Leave marriage law as it is, say NSW Baptists**

There is strong and widespread support among NSW and ACT Baptists for marriage as currently defined in federal legislation, and no plans to extend this to include same sex relationships, the President of the Baptist Union of NSW, Mr John Brew, said today.

Mr Brew joined Baptist leaders across Australia in urging Prime Minister Julia Gillard and politicians across the political spectrum to oppose moves to change the current legal definition of marriage by extending it to include same sex couples.

“A strong society needs a strong commitment to marriage and family. Marriage is best understood as the union of a man and a woman, and the law is best left as it is,” Baptist ethicist and public theologian, Reverend Rod Benson, said.

There are compelling cultural and heritage reasons for rejecting this proposed radical social reform, and for Baptists there are also deeply held theological convictions about the nature and purpose of marriage which preclude widening the definition of marriage to include same sex couples.

God loves all people unconditionally, but has commended certain moral standards for our common good. The Bible teaches that the only appropriate context for sexual intercourse is between a woman and a man who are married to each other. For some people this is a significant struggle. As Baptist theologian and ethicist Stanley Grenz said:

Christians are compelled to accept and acknowledge persons, regardless of lifestyle, as objects of God’s compassion, concern, and love ... For Christians of either sexual orientation, the call to live out one’s sexuality in ways that bring honor to God is a difficult challenge, especially in the midst of our permissive society. Yet, the resources of the Holy Spirit are greater than the difficulty of the calling, and obedience to the divine design is the path of greater joy.<sup>1</sup>

**Media contact: John Brew 0414 833 252 or Rod Benson 0412 421 678**

---

<sup>1</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *Sexual Ethics: An Evangelical Perspective* (second edition; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997) 246.