

MEDIA RELEASE

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Marriage is not for same sex couples, say Baptists

The sentiments expressed by the Reverend Nathan Nettleton in an ABC *Compass* program on same sex marriage legislation broadcast on Sunday July 10 do not represent the views of Australian Baptist Ministries or an overwhelming majority of Baptists in Australia and around the world.

In November 2010 Australian Baptist Ministries reaffirmed marriage as the union of one man and one woman, and has commended the Australian Government for reflecting the biblical teaching on marriage in the federal Marriage Act. Marriage is not the appropriate institution for same sex couples.

Australian Baptist Ministries supports the rights of all couples to justice with respect to property and like entitlements and acknowledges that people, including some in Baptist churches, face difficult issues with respect to sexuality. Recognition of such rights and difficulties does not justify major changes to our convictions about marriage or to marriage legislation.

“It is regrettable that Mr Nettleton failed to consult with Australian Baptist leaders before expressing his personal views about same sex marriage on national television. To his credit he made it clear in the program that he was not representing the official Baptist position on marriage. It is disappointing that ABC staff chose not to invite a more representative Baptist voice to participate in the *Compass* program,” Revd Dr John Beasy, President of Australian Baptist Ministries, said.

The Baptist World Alliance, representing over 47 million baptised believers and 210 Baptist Unions and Conventions in more than 200 countries, shares the views of Australian Baptist Ministries on marriage. The Baptist World Alliance views homosexual lifestyle as incompatible with the teachings of Scripture and no BWA member body affirms, promotes or approves of same sex marriage.

At the Baptist World Alliance annual gathering in July 1994 in Uppsala, Sweden, the BWA General Council passed a resolution confirming that the BWA “proclaims the biblical definition of the family, a permanent, monogamous, heterosexual union, as the original divine plan for family life which must continue to serve as the foundation and ideal for an ordered and effective society.”

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