A prime contender for the crown of the Miss USA beauty pageant is out of the running after a gay activist judge asked her what her views were on homosexual marriage. The issue continues to divide America as more states press for equal status for homosexual and lesbian partners. Iowa and Vermont recently became the third and fourth American states to approve homosexual marriage, and other states such as New York, Maine and New Hampshire look set to follow now that President Barack Obama has come out against the Biblical institution. Homosexual blogger Perez Hilton quizzed Miss California contender Carrie Prejan about her views on marriage. She responded that she believed marriage should be between a man and a woman.

Quote: *""We live in a land where you can choose same-sex marriage or opposite marriage," said Ms Prejean, in a section of the show that has become a popular clip on YouTube. "I believe that a marriage should be between a man and a woman," she continued. "No offence to anybody out there, but that's how I was raised." The remarks drew a mixture of booing and applause from the audience. Speaking after the show, which was broadcast on Sunday evening in the US, Ms Prejean said: "I wouldn't have had it any other way. I said what I feel. I stated an opinion that was true to myself and that's all I can do."*

Hilton said he was *"floored"* at her comments, which he said had *"alienated millions of gay and lesbian Americans, their families and their supporters"*
. In reality it was Hilton's question that alienated millions of Americans. He asked Miss California a question about her own personal beliefs, which have no bearing whatsoever on her acceptability to run for the title of Miss USA. Prejean answered Hilton's question in a very reserved and respectable manner, expressing her beliefs without condemning others who think differently. The BBC reported that the contest organizer, Keith Lewis, was
"personally saddened and hurt that Miss California believes marriage rights belong only to a man and a woman"
. The question is, what on Earth has Miss California's personal beliefs got to do with well being of Keith Lewis? Nothing at all. It seems that it has now become a criminal offence to hold a personal belief in Biblical morality the US. The BBC article fails to mention the fact that Hilton himself is homosexual, and instead attempts to portray him as an independent and impartial judge whose only concern is for the
"millions of Americans"
who may have been offended by this 'bigoted beauty queen'. Baloney! The BBC also fails to mention the fact that Hilton later branded Miss California a
"
*dumb b****
"
on his video blog, for sacrificing the crown by standing up for what is right.

Although I am angry at the utter depravity now emanating from the United States and Britain, I like this story, because it reminds me that as Christians we are all striving for the crown. Not for a physical crown, nor for the type of crown that a beauty queen would wear, but for the laurel wreath that is given to those contenders who are running a race. Jesus Christ said of the Philadelphian church...

Revelation 3:10-11
Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

The Philadelphian church is the only church mentioned among the seven churches in Asia which the Lord had no word of condemnation for. The Lord commends them for having "a little strength
", and encourages them to cling to what they have, so that no other contender would take the crown they were striving to win. The Lord was warning them not to allow anything to come between them and the goal, so they would not lose out on the reward that awaited them at the finishing line. When I was in Greece, I heard how the Apostle Paul met up with Priscilla and Aquilla, who were tent makers. Apparently they made tents for those who were competing in the games, and that this was where Paul got much of his inspiration from in regards to the race of life.

Hebrews 12:1-2
Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Whenever an athlete takes part in a race, they set aside every hindrance that might slow their pace and prevent them from winning the prize. In my own life's experience that "weight" is personal ambitions, selfish desires, and anything else that would prevent me from running well. Paul also states that we need to lay aside the "
sin
" which so easily besets us. That sin may be different for each one of us, but we all have one thing in common, that it so easily besets us. I often struggle with this besetting sin. And when I sin I get depressed because I know I am not running the race as well as I should be. Instead of finishing in first place, perhaps I will get the runners-up prize. But I will lose the crown that I

could have got if I had run well. If we are going to run well we need to be living right before God. This is not a race to see who is the fastest runner, or who is the greatest athlete. Heavenly rewards are not given on that basis. This race is an endurance race. Paul says we need to "
run with patience
". The course is set for us based on our own abilities and responsibilities, and we will be rewarded not for finishing first, but for finishing well. Our reward will not be based on successes but on faithfulness. The reward is promised to the "
good and faithful servant
" (Matthew 25:21) who is found to be running well at His Lord's return (Matthew24:46). A good athlete always keeps their eyes on the goal. Many a race has been lost by those who looked back to see where their competitors were. Our eyes should be on the Lord Jesus Christ. He has already finished the course and is waiting for us at the finish line. The joy that was set before Him was men and women being reconciled to Himself. He endured the cross for you. He thought little of the shame because He thought much of you. How much have you thought of Him? Why don't you trust in Him for salvation today. The Bible says that "a
s many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name
", John 1:12.

Miss California may have lost her crown and the praise of men, but that is little esteemed in God's sight. Don't lose your crown.

Source BBC , Time , Christian Century , Daily Mail