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Church "should break from civil partnerships"

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A conservative group within the Church of Scotland has criticised its leaders for drawing up proposals on how to deal with civil partnerships amongst ministers.

Forward Together, an evangelical group thought to include 300 members in Scotland, says the proposals will push the Church further away from "biblical teachings".

Set to be introduced at the Church's General Assembly this May, the proposals are thought to call for ministers who have civil partnerships not to be punished by the Church.

They are also calling for pension and housing rights to be equalised in light of the new laws, which give same-sex couples the same rights as heterosexual couples.

But Forward Together has slammed the proposals and called for more restrictions and opposition to civil partnerships.

"Before addressing the legal points about pension rights for ministers' civil partners, the church must reach a clear view concerning such relationships in the ordained ministry," Gordon Kennedy, a minister and chairman of Forward Together told The Herald newspaper.

"The proposals, if adopted, would open the way for a significant departure from the Bible's teaching and from historic Christian practice," he added.

He is calling for a more concrete decision to be made about civil partnerships in Scotland by the Church.

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