

Euthanasia Could Be Next Supreme Court Battleground

While four states have affirmatively legalized the dangerous practice of doctor-prescribed suicide, and legislative efforts continue to expand that number, an even greater threat may be posed by the United States Supreme Court. We are in a situation, with the current Supreme Court vacancy, under which whoever gets to appoint the new justice can definitively shift the High Court's ideological balance.

Before Justice Antonin Scalia's untimely death, it was widely recognized that on many issues, including abortion, the Court had been divided 4-4 with Justice Anthony Kennedy often providing the deciding vote. Replacing Scalia with a justice holding an opposite perspective would typically lead to either 5-4 or 6-3 rulings on such issues.

Euthanasia could be among them.

As brief background, nearly every state across the country has long had a law protecting against assisting another in a suicide. There has been an ongoing attempt by pro-euthanasia advocates in the U.S., as a first step, to carve out an exemption that says your doctor can give you a lethal prescription to take home and overdose on if you meet several scant legal requirements.

The primary organization behind these efforts is Compassion and Choices, or C&C (formerly the Hemlock Society). While those at C&C are seeking to legalize much broader euthanasia, it has made a strategic decision to begin with this thin-edge-of-the wedge approach.

Currently, doctor-prescribed suicide is legal in Oregon, Washington and Vermont, and it may have some legal immunity in Montana, due to a court decision. Doctors can start writing

lethal prescriptions in June in California.

The 2016 election season will have decades-long ramifications on what direction the Supreme Court takes this country. The issue of assisting suicide could come before the High Court.

It is critical to realize that the word “court” has become largely a misnomer. While the Supreme Court does indeed exercise judicial functions in a number of cases with low-ideological content—settling contract and patent issues, for example—when it comes to making “constitutional” rulings the body has gradually come to act more and more like a “Supreme Legislature.”

Whereas in past decades, presidential candidates often eschewed so-called litmus tests for how their appointees would vote on specific issues, instead talking generally about “judicial philosophy,” today those in both parties talk openly about a laundry list of positions anyone they’d nominate would have to take.

For example, it is clear as daylight that if the Scalia vacancy is filled by a President Obama, Clinton or Sanders, there will be five votes on the nine-member body to strike down essentially all limits on or regulations of abortion, ranging from the Hyde Amendment through informed consent and parental involvement laws to the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg contends that any law touching abortion differently than, say, prostate surgery invalidly constitutes “sex discrimination.”

For a summary of expected changes from a self-described “liberal” constitutional law professor, Erwin Cheminsky, see [here](#).

Less widely discussed is that the issue of assisting suicide will almost inevitably again come before the High Court. Few may remember the justices did address the issue almost 20 years ago.

In 1997, the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Washington v. Glucksberg*, unanimously rejected the claim that there was a constitutional “right” to assist suicide. But many of the concurring Justices suggested they agreed only because there was not yet enough evidence to show that states could not rationally fear abuses.

Moreover, in one concurring opinion in *Glucksberg*, then-Justice John Paul Stevens made a point of saying that he did not intend to “foreclose the possibility that an individual plaintiff seeking to hasten her death, or a doctor whose assistance was sought, could prevail in a more particularized challenge.”

In addition to this open-ended invitation to bring a case in the future, Supreme Court Justices have also indicated that they like to look at trends.

In the 2005 *Roper v. Simmons* case (an unrelated juvenile death penalty case), the Court wrote, “It is not so much the number of ... States [changing their laws] that is significant, but the consistency of the direction of the change.” Despite their misleading nature, official reports from California, Oregon and other states where euthanasia is legal could in the future be cited to assert that fear of abuses has become irrational. The Justices could conclude they would no longer allow states the constitutional latitude to prevent assisting suicide.

So while you might not live in one of the states where doctor-prescribed suicide is legal, if more states join the ranks of California, Oregon, Washington and Vermont—and above all if 2016 sees the election of a president and Senate likely to use the next Supreme Court vacancy to nominate and confirm a Justice sympathetic to euthanasia—there is the real risk the U.S. Supreme Court might well follow the Supreme Court of Canada recent decision holding there is a federal constitutional right to assist suicide.

The *Carter v. Canada* decision did not limit itself to those said to be “terminally ill.” It mandated legalized assisting suicide for anyone who “has a grievous and irremediable medical condition (including an illness, disease or disability) that causes enduring suffering that is intolerable to the individual in the circumstances of his or her condition.” “Irremediable,” the court stressed, “does not require the patient to undertake treatments that are not acceptable to the individual.”

Moreover, while the ruling on its face only applied to “a competent adult person who ... clearly consents to the termination of life,” the court hinted that it may later hold that surrogates have the right to kill people with disabilities who cannot speak for themselves and who have never asked to die. Having dismissed any distinction between rejecting life-preserving treatment and direct killing on the grounds that both hasten death, the court noted, “In some cases, [decisions to reject life-saving treatment] are governed by advance directives, or made by a substitute decision-maker.”

Whether in one sweeping decision or through a carefully paced step-by-step series, an ideologically committed Supreme Court majority might well echo the Canadian court in ultimately stripping states of their legislative discretion. They would no longer be able to protect those with Alzheimer’s disease or other judgment-impairing mental disabilities from being killed at the direction of their relatives, guardians or perhaps “ethics committees” at health care facilities presently often empowered to cut off treatment and assisted feeding for those under their care who have no one to speak for them.

Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has called assisting suicide “an appropriate right to have.” In her first campaign question on the issue in a town hall in February, *Politico* reported “she said, ‘It is a crucial issue that people deserve to understand from their own ethical, religious and faith-

based perspectives.’ Clinton added that she wants to examine what other countries, like the Netherlands, have experienced after enacting laws.”

In February of this year, Clinton’s rival, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), speaking at a Seniors Decide Forum hosted by the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, said that terminally ill patients “have the right to make that decision for themselves,” in response to a question on “aid-in-dying.” The clip can be found [here](#).

With the composition of the Supreme Court in the balance, it is more urgent now than ever before to raise awareness and fight back on this important issue. We must tell our elected officials that killing the patient must never be condoned as a reasonable “solution” to human problems!

What a God-Given Covenant Friend Really Looks Like

False friends. That was the topic of two of my recent columns. Those columns—“5 Ways to Recognize False Friends” and “5 More Ways to Recognize False Friends”—struck a nerve with our readers. It seems many Christians have friends who stab them in the back, climb over them for opportunity, and run the other direction when trouble comes.

A friend of mine, Jennifer Eivaz, suggested I look at the other side of the coin: What are the characteristics of a true covenant friend? What does it take to be a good pal? What does the Bible say about real friendships? I thought her suggestion was brilliant.

Although I don't expect this article to get the tens of thousands of shares the last two did, I feel it's important to dive deeper into the issue because we can probably all be better friends. With that in mind:

Listen to Jennifer's podcast on this topic: What a True Covenant Friend Looks Like.

A true covenant friend sticks closer than a brother: That's according to Proverbs 18:24: "A man who has friends must show himself friendly, and there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." What exactly, though, does that mean? How does a friend stick closer than a brother? You would expect your family to stand with you in a trial, but true friends sometimes show up when family can't or won't, defying the bonds of nature. True friends are like family, and often even closer than family. Proverbs 17:1 also speaks to his bond.

JOIN JENNIFER ON FACEBOOK FOR SPIRITUAL COMMENTARY AND ENCOURAGEMENT. [CLICK HERE.](#)

A true covenant friend makes sacrifices when necessary: John 15:13 says "Greater love has no man than this: that a man lay down his life for his friends." True covenant friends will make sacrifices to help you. Merriam-Webster defines sacrifice as "the act of giving up something that you want to keep, especially in order to get or do something else or to help someone." You may not have to literally lay your life down, but you may have to sacrifice time, money and even your own needs at times to help a friend.

A true covenant friend will stand up for you and fight alongside you: In 1 Samuel 18-20, Saul tried to kill David a dozen times. Jonathan, Saul's son, had a covenant relationship with David and stood with him through the assaults. Even though Jonathan was next in line for the throne of Israel, he helped David escape his father's wrath (1 Sam. 20). That's a self-sacrificing friend.

A true covenant friend will tell you what nobody else will:

Proverbs 27:6 says, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Friends should lift you up, but sometimes the Lord will use them to help you root out wrong behaviors and mindsets. Of course, they should do it in love and not with accusations.

A true covenant friend will get into agreement with you:

Amos 3:3 says, "Do two people walk together, if they have not agreed?" That doesn't mean that true friends will agree on every little thing, but it does mean that they won't break relationship over disagreements. You've heard it said, "We'll agree to disagree." True friends find agreement.

A true covenant friend is someone you can trust with anything:

Although we must ultimately put our trust in God over man, trust is the cornerstone of every relationship. Once violated, trust can be difficult to earn back. True friends have tight lips, have your back and have the integrity not to share your personal life with others or break your boundaries. True friends are consistent and don't merely say the words but do the actions to back them up.

A true covenant friend walks in love, which includes

forgiveness: A true friend believes in you, stands by you and sticks out the tough times in the relationship. Nobody's perfect, and we're all growing in the fruit of the Spirit, but a true friend treats the relationship with 1 Corinthians 4:8 in mind: "Love suffers long and is kind; love envies not; love flaunts not itself and is not puffed up, does not behave itself improperly, seeks not its own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails."

This is not an exhaustive list, but it's a good place to start.

My dad always told me this: At the end of your life, you can count your true covenant friends on one hand. I'm in my mid-40s now, and I am finding that to be true. I've had a lot of friends over the course of my life but true covenant friends are few and far between.

Treasure them like gold. Cherish them with all of your heart. Respect and honor them at all times. You can't make a true covenant friendship happen but you can ask God for them—and you can work on being the best friend you can possibly be.

Is There Enough Evidence to Convict You of Being a Believer?

Jesus said, *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved. But he who does not believe will be condemned. These signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover”* (Mark 16:16-18, MEV).

Jesus' exhortation is alarming for all of us! It causes my imagination to explode with possibilities. Four things immediately jump out at me:

1. According to Jesus, if I “believe,” then there will supernatural signs that follow me.
2. Jesus' idea of “believing” is much more than embracing a set of doctrines that I agree with or philosophies I adhere

to. "Believing" requires action and experience.

3. Supernatural signs follow "Believers," not just leaders, apostles or prophets. I mean, these signs are not relegated to a special class of elect citizens of heaven.

4. Supernatural signs are also timeless. Jesus didn't say, "These signs will follow first-century believers." He said these signs will follow "those who believe."

Wow! What would happen if every believer in the world actually demonstrated the raw power of God everywhere they went? Can you say "overload!"?

But what do these "signs" look like? Let's do a little investigation together:

1. Power over demons. Believers have been given authority and power over all the power of the demonic world. Now that's good news!

2. Believers will be given new heavenly languages. It's great to be able to communicate with angels in their language—a vocabulary that the demonic realm doesn't know. It's also important to note that in the book of Acts chapter 2, many people spoke in human languages that they supernaturally acquired by the Holy Spirit.

3. Believers have power over nature—both the animal/reptile/fish kingdom (serpents), and the biological kingdom (deadly poison).

4. Believers have the power to heal diseases (lay hands on the sick and they recover). It's important to note here that Jesus never told believers to pray for the sick! He said "Heal the sick."

Many people read these verses and compare their walk to His call. They immediately begin to reduce the words of Jesus to their meager experience, knowing that they are believers, yet

recognizing that the only signs that follow them are Scripture memorization and witnessing.

This usually leads to some pretty intense mental gymnastics to try to justify why these Scriptures don't apply to them.

But what would happen if instead of reducing the Scriptures to our experience, we raised our experience to the standard of the words of Jesus?

"Impossible!" Some protest. "Humans can't do miracles!"

Unless they can! U-N-L-E-S-S they can!

I mean, what if Jesus is right? What if God is really in us? I'm saying what if the God, who created everything and has all power, actually wants to demonstrate to the world His amazing power through us—all of us?

Can we really do all things through Christ who lives in us?

For me, it all boils down to one question: Is there enough evidence to convict me of being a "Believer" in the courts of heaven? Would my attorney, Jesus, be able to successfully prove to the Father, beyond a reasonable doubt, that I am a "Believer" and not just a Christian? I hope so.

Profound, yet simple.

What about you? Is there enough evidence to convict you of being a believer? Let me know in the comments below.

Kris Valotton is the Senior Associate Leader of Bethel Church in Redding, California and co-founder of Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry (BSSM). Kris travels internationally training and equipping people to successfully fulfill their divine purpose. He's a bestselling author, having written more than a dozen books and training manuals to help prepare believers for life in the kingdom. He has a diverse background in business, counseling, consulting, pastoring and teaching,

which gives him unique leadership insights and perspectives. Kris has a passion to use his experience and his prophetic gift to assist world leaders in achieving their goals and accomplishing their mission.

For the original article, visit .

If You Need Something to Revitalize Your Walk With God, This Could Help

A wonderful thing will happen to you when you have a new believer in your life: It will spiritually revive you. It is like going to Disneyland with adults versus going with children.

Adults at Disneyland tend to complain, starting with the price of admission, which is extraordinarily high. Once in the park, adults usually want to eat. Then of course they are sleepy, so they are wondering if, among Tomorrowland, Fantasyland and all the other lands, there is such a thing as Napland.

Adults tend to be critical, quick to point out the lack of realism in the rides, or how it was “so much better when Walt was still alive.” They will also complain about how long they have to wait in line for a ride (especially when they see the sign that says, “If you are standing here, you will be on the ride in ... one month”).

In contrast, try going to Disneyland with kids. It is, as the song says, “a whole new world.” Kids are so excited to see the characters, experience the thrill of the rides, and visit the

various lands so adeptly designed by Disney Imagineers. For children, Disneyland really is a magical place. The favorite time for kids at Disneyland is going in; the favorite time for adults is going out.

Now, think of going to church with those who have been Christians and churchgoers for many years, even decades. You can find yourself taking things for granted, complaining and even become somewhat jaded.

The music is too loud. The music is not loud enough. The church is too small. The church is too big. The pastor's sermons are too long. The pastor's sermons are too short. You don't like it when the pastor adds a call for people to come to Christ at the end of the service because you have "heard all that before" and besides, you want to go to lunch!

The list of complaints continues.

I have a solution for you: Take a nonbeliever or a newly minted believer to church with you next Sunday. I guarantee you will hear and see things far differently when you bring a visitor. If they are not yet a Christian, you will find yourself praying fervently for the pastor's message and hope he extends that invitation for people to come to Christ. And if that person you brought does believe in Jesus, now you have the privilege and joy of helping them get on their feet and reach spiritual maturity.

Like taking a child to Disneyland, when you have a new believer in tow, you see and hear things in a new way—through their eyes, so to speak. Watch them process the Word of God for the first time and discover the joy of worship. It can revitalize you!

And those amazing conversations after church as they ask you countless questions about what passages from Scripture mean. You realize, for starters, that you know a lot more than you think you did. All that time listening to Bible studies and

studying on your own has paid huge dividends. And for those questions you do not have the answer to, you can go to the pastor or a more mature Christian for their insight—and, of course, you can search the Scriptures on your own.

No doubt about it, new believers are the lifeblood of the church. They also are the lifeblood of the Christian. We all need a new believer in our life.

The preceding was adapted from Tell Someone: You Can Share the Good News by Greg Laurie, Copyright B&H Publishing Group 2016. Laurie is senior pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship® in Riverside and Irvine, California.

Liberals Enraged Over NASCAR Invocation

My good buddy Phil Robertson has drawn the ire of a bunch of Jesus-bashing, liberal lug nuts after he petitioned the Lord during a NASCAR invocation to put a “Jesus man in the White House.”

Brother Phil delivered the pre-race invocation April 9 at the Texas Motor Speedway’s Duck Commander 500. And it was a mighty fine invocation, indeed.

READ: [How Phil Robertson Is Praying This Political Season](#)

“I pray Father that we put a Jesus man in the White House,” he prayed. “Help us do that and help us all to repent, to do what is right, to love you more and to love each other. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.”

Brother Phil also mentioned the Bible, guns and thanked the

Good Lord for the United States military—just like any good church-going, Christian man would do.

But the Duck Commander's heartfelt invocation caused the mainstream media to blow a collective head gasket.

Sports commentators and journalists suggested pre-race prayers were too "Southern" and too "redneck." As if there's something wrong with being a Southern-fried redneck?

Deadspin called Brother Phil an "unapologetic bigot" and a "duck call industrialist."

The *Associated Press* auto racing writer accused Brother Phil of pushing an agenda—and accused NASCAR of "clouding its image with politics."

"There are Democrats who enjoy NASCAR," writer Jenna Fryer sneered. "Jews and atheists and women, too."

Consider the words from this *Orlando Sentinel* column titled, "NASCAR doesn't need Phil Robertson's prayers."

"What if at next Sunday's race, someone got up and prayed for gun control, the Koran and that a Muhammad-woman be put in the White House?" writer David Whitley opined. "Most of the people defending Robertson would be throwing tire irons at their TVs."

Well, I sincerely doubt a devout Muslim would be asking Allah to put a "Muhammad-woman" anywhere near the White House. And let's be honest, you don't see too many burkas at Bristol.

Beyond the Flag ran an essay written by Christopher Olmstead that contemplated whether or not religion still belongs in NASCAR.

"For a sport that is trying to become a global success is it appropriate to attach a certain religion or religious tone to yourself?" Olmstead asked. "For a sport that might have

several drivers who might not believe in God or religion is it appropriate to hold the pre-race invocation? For a sport that is trying to reach out to different cultures around the world who may believe in a higher power other than God, is it appropriate to have the invocation?"

It's tempting to tell Brother Phil's critics to blow it out their tail pipes—but that's not the Christian thing to do.

And besides, Brother Phil has more supporters than detractors—including the president of Texas Motor Speedway.

"He said what he felt and believed, and there are a lot of people that agree with him and a lot that disagree with him," Eddie Gossage told the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. "Nowadays, you cannot say what you think because of political correctness. So I guess everyone has a right to free speech or nobody does."

Prayer is an important part of Southern culture. It's what we do. It's who we are—whether we're asking the Good Lord to bless the butter beans or offering an "unspoken" prayer request before Bible Study.

And that's why the mainstream media may be in for a rude awakening if they think they can "prayer-shame" the good, church-going racing fans of America. It's not going to happen.

READ: 1 Evangelist's Bold Response to the #PrayerShaming Attacks

Why, NASCAR without Jesus would be like biscuits without gravy.

Would You Take a 'Jesus Shot'?

Can you put Jesus' healing powers in a miraculous little dose meant to offer long-term relief of pain?

Dr. John Michael Loneragan says yes, and it's in the form of the "Jesus shot."

"He credits Jesus with the idea to combine the ingredients in one injection," says ordained minister Mary Schrick, who owns of Full Circle Health in Edmond, Oklahoma.

However, the \$300 mixture of Dexamethasone, Kenalog and vitamin B12 swirls with controversy.

Courts convicted Loneragan of tax evasion, and the State Medical Board of Ohio revoked his medical license in 2005. Seven years later, though, the Oklahoma Medical Board voted to allow him to practice again, provided he had supervision.

Now, Loneragan's cocktail is in the spotlight after a Texas politician reportedly used taxpayer money to seek out the shot while on a business trip.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller, a former rodeo cowboy who suffers from chronic pain, said the "Jesus Shot" worked well for him. But many practicing medical professionals say the shot's claims are "outrageous."

"This is some variant of giving some anti-inflammatory drug and cortisol, which is what all chronic pain patients are treated with regularly in almost all pain clinics," said Dr. Vania Apkarian, a physiology, anesthesiology, and physical medicine and rehabilitation professor at Northwestern University. "It's effective for a week or so, and eventually the pain comes back."

Marco Rubio Says He Backs Ted Cruz

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) discussed the current GOP presidential nomination fight, which he was once a part of, during Tuesday night's episode of LevinTV with nationally syndicated radio host Mark Levin.

The conversation, understandably, came down to who Rubio would support between the two leading contenders: businessman Donald Trump and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas). The Florida senator had to carefully navigate the question before answering he supports Cruz.

"I've been pretty clear, I want the Republican nominee to be a conservative, and in my view, at this moment, of the candidates who are still actively campaigning, the only one [presidential candidate] that fits that criteria is Ted Cruz," he said.

Rubio has to be careful how he answers these kinds of questions because he has been adamant that while he's suspended his campaign, he has not dropped out of the race. That is because he wants to retain the delegates that have been bound to him during the early states.

Depending on individual state rules, those delegates could be reallocated if he fully drops out of the race. And, technically, he could still resume campaigning, although he is mathematically eliminated from winning a majority of delegates before the national convention begins.

On a second, or subsequent ballot, however, with the delegates "released" to vote their conscience, Rubio stated he hopes

those delegates vote for Cruz.

“As far as the delegates we’ve earned, look, they’re bound on the first ballot, and I want to make sure they’re there on the first ballot,” he said. “After that, as you know, these delegates, many of them, will be free to vote for another candidate, and I hope that they’ll nominate a conservative.

“The Republican Party has to be the home of the conservative movement. If not, it loses its reason to exist as an organization.”

Blake Shelton Refuses to Leave His “Savior’s Shadow”

The Voice judge and country superstar Blake Shelton appears to have penned his latest single after his faith.

According to *Taste of Country*, fans have not seen this side of Shelton, who has been dating fellow musician Gwen Stefani for the last few months.

READ: 5 Celebrities Giving Glory to Jesus Right Now

“Here the vocalist shows all of his vulnerabilities, revealing a man who is still very rooted in his faith and raising,” ToC writes. “That’s counter to who he appears to be on television and Twitter, but no less honest.”

In the song, Shelton sings:

*I’m standing in my Savior’s shadow,
He is watching over me
I feel the rain, I hear the thunder,*

*As he cries for me
I'm standing in my Savior's shadow,
Grace will lead to where I'm free
I take his hand, we walk together
And his light shines on me*

*Though the devil try to break me
My sweet Jesus won't forsake me
When I'm in my Savior's shadow
Where I'm supposed to be.*

Republican Rules Expert: Establishment Has One Way to Steal Nomination From Trump or Cruz

Morton Blackwell, founder of the Leadership Institute, is the Republican national committeeman from Virginia and a Rules Committee member since 1972, making him one of the foremost experts on GOP national convention rules.

He recently spoke out about the current delegate situation facing the party, discussing the way—because, as he put it, there is only one way now—the party establishment can prevent either Donald Trump or Ted Cruz from becoming the Republican presidential nominee. That “way” would be to rewrite the rules before the convention begins.

At issue for the GOP establishment is Rule 40(b), which requires a candidate much have a delegate majority from at least eight states in order to qualify for nomination. Trump

has surpassed that number and Cruz, who currently has seven delegate majorities, is expected to surpass it, as well.

Blackwell tried to change the rule, twice, before any votes were cast in the current election cycle, but those efforts were blocked by attorneys representing the establishment interests. But now that it is all but impossible for any other candidate to qualify for the nomination, he fears they could try to change the rules between now and when the convention gathers in mid-July.

“I think what happened is the establishment that put in these rules, expecting that it would help establishment candidates for president, still believed in January that these rules would facilitate the nomination of an establishment person,” Blackwell told *World Net Daily* last week. “It appears that the only two candidates for whom votes may count at the convention coming up in Cleveland would be Ted Cruz and Donald Trump. That is why the establishment is now talking about changing these rules.”

He told *The Washington Examiner* the likely time for a rule change will come at the RNC’s spring meetings. Those are scheduled for April 20-23 in Hollywood, Fla.

“[RNC Chairman Reince Priebus] has the votes to do that if he decides to do it that way,” he said. “And don’t you believe anybody who says—if it does happen that way—that Reince didn’t decide to do it that way.”

Blackwell has said any such move would likely be the end of the Republican Party.

Senator Finds Irony in President Obama's Supreme Court Comments

At least one person found some irony in President Obama's recent speech at the University of Chicago law school.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) took to the Senate floor Tuesday to point it out for his colleagues. The key point: they both agree the high court has become politicized.

"I think, just from reading the cases, you'll acknowledge that there's politics in legal rulings," Grassley said. "That's what President Obama said last week when he visited the University of Chicago.

"The President met with law students and answered their questions. They asked him about judicial nominations, including his decision to make a nomination to fill Justice Scalia's seat on the Supreme Court.

"His responses were revealing.

"I agree with President Obama that too often politics seep into legal rulings. He's right as a factual matter. In fact I said the same thing on the Senate floor a few days before the President did.

"Oddly, those on the left who were up in arms over my remarks were silent on the President's. I suppose that's because, unlike the President, I think it's a bad thing that there's politics in judicial decision-making these days."

Grassley said politics in judicial opinions means that "something other than law" forms the basis of those decisions. It means the jurist is "reading his or her own views into the

Constitution,” which he has repeatedly said is the biggest threat to public confidence in the court system.

He expounded on those views Tuesday:

“The President’s idea of what’s appropriate for justices to consider is totally at odds with our constitutional system. We are a government of laws and not a government of judges.

“I’ve said before that we should have a serious public discussion about what the Constitution means and how our judges should interpret it. President Obama and I have very different views on those questions.

“Politics belongs to us—it’s between the people and their elected representatives. It’s important that judges don’t get involved in politics. That’s because, unlike senators, lifetime-appointed federal judges aren’t accountable to the people in elections.

“It’s also because when nine unelected justices make decisions based on their own policy preferences, rather than constitutional text, they rob from the American people the ability to govern themselves. And when that happens, individual liberty pays the price ...

“James Madison—the Father of the Constitution—explained the same thing in a letter to Richard Henry Lee. He said that ‘the sense,’ or meaning, ‘in which the Constitution was accepted and ratified by the nation’ defines the Constitution.

“He said that’s the only way the Constitution is legitimate. That’s because, in Madison’s words, ‘if the meaning of the text be sought in the changeable meaning of the words composing it,’ the ‘shape and attributes’ of government would change over time.

“And importantly, that change would occur without the people’s consent. It wouldn’t be consistent with the way we govern

ourselves through our representatives. That's a very different view than the President suggested in Chicago last week when he said that ambiguous cases ask a judge to consider 'how we actually live.'

"In President Obama's view, the judge isn't asking what a law meant when it was passed, but what it *should* mean today. President Obama described this as his 'Progressive view of how the courts should operate.' With respect to the President, it's my view that the courts shouldn't operate in a political way at all.

"Not a progressive one, not a moderate one, not a conservative one.

"Instead, in my view, the courts should operate in a *constitutional* way that ensures government by the people."