

California Gay Ruling May Spark Evangelical Activism

Harry R. Jackson Jr., senior pastor of Hope Christian Church, told Charisma Thursday that the decision by the California Supreme Court to overturn two state laws defining marriage as between one man and one woman may propel evangelicals to greater political activism.



[] Christian observers say Thursday's decision by the California Supreme Court to overturn two state laws defining marriage as between one man and one woman may propel evangelicals to greater political activism.

During a Strang-sponsored teleconference Thursday night, Harry R. Jackson Jr., senior pastor of Maryland-based Hope Christian Church, told *Charisma's* publisher, Stephen Strang, that the 4-3 decision went against Californians' popular opinion and that the decision may "wake the sleeping giant of evangelical activism to reinsert itself in this election."

"Until now, the litmus test issues of abortion and gay marriage have not been the mainstay of the faith community's discussion," Jackson said. "This ruling will change everything."

The decision, which could go into effect next month, drew a firestorm of reactions from citizens and leaders across the nation.

Opponents of the decision want the court to stay the ruling until November when a proposed state constitutional amendment that garnered 1 million signatures and has already been submitted to election officials is expected to be on the ballot. If passed the amendment could reverse the Supreme Court's decision and once again define marriage in California as only between a man and a woman.

Louis P. Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, says the recent verdict only makes the need for a national constitutional amendment more urgent.

“This only sharpens into focus the need for a national, federal amendment to the U.S. Constitution to fully protect marriage between a man and a woman,” he said. “Forty-four states have constitutional or statutory prohibitions against same-sex marriage; therefore, a constitutional amendment at the federal level has a basis within these states.”

Listen to the Strang-sponsored teleconference with Harry Jackson.