

A New Coalition Emerges to Protect Marriage

✘ Last week (May 23 and 24), 175 Christian leaders from around the country gathered for a 24-hour marriage summit in the Washington, D.C., metro area. The small group represented nearly 100,000 individual churches and several denominations. The purpose of the summit was to strategize how we would respond to President Obama's endorsement of same-sex marriage.

The group, which included pastors, community activists and denominational leaders, decided to send out a group letter to the president and to develop a pro-biblical marriage resource that could be used around the country.

The summit culminated with a press conference in which black, Hispanic, white and Asian leaders stood shoulder-to-shoulder. We wanted to let the nation know that Christian leaders will not be silent on the issue of same-sex marriage. We also wanted to ask the president and the legislators of both parties to convey to us their specific strategies.

Many of the leaders who attended our press conference voted for President Obama in 2008; nonetheless, they wanted clarity on what the

president, the Senate and the Congress planned to actually do as a result of the president's "evolution" concerning same-sex marriage.

We are deeply concerned about what this means for the future of the already dangerously weakened social fabric of our country. The first media responses to our press conference were predictable. Many outlets seemed to dismiss us as simply anti-Obama "Neanderthals." One of CNN's press team even accused Tony Perkins, president of Family Research Council, of having a personal hatred for homosexuals.

While traditional news outlets continue to create and misread their own tea leaves (polls), pro-biblical marriage masses are rallying. For example, I was present Tuesday when marriage advocates delivered 113,000 petitions to the Maryland State House in order to add a marriage amendment to the 2012 ballot (twice as many petitions as needed, delivered five weeks early).

Those who misconstrue our concern about same sex marriage as rank bigotry would do well to keep in mind several facts:

First, we must be clear that this is not primarily a political issue. Democratic President Bill Clinton understood this when he signed the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996. People across the political spectrum believe that marriage is the union of one man and

one woman. It is a shame that an issue of such magnitude is being intellectually suffocated and pushed into a partisan political package.

Second, African-Americans have been among the most difficult to sway on this issue. While some may indeed change their minds because of President Obama's endorsement, word of mouth around our community indicates that many more no longer feel they can wholeheartedly support the president. They may not become Republicans, but their sentiments may be similar to those of a former president who said famously, "I didn't leave the Democratic Party. The party left me." The Obama endorsement seemed like a slap in the face to grass-roots black and Hispanic Christians.

Third, the overwhelming majority of African-Americans do not believe that the redefinition of marriage to include homosexual unions is in keeping with the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) activists have repeatedly attempted to hijack the moral authority of racial minorities who suffered under centuries of legalized racial discrimination at the hands of the government.

Americans as a whole should know that most black Americans find this deeply offensive. At the core of this new coalition is a commitment to biblical marriage that transcends race, class or culture. The Hispanic community shares the common-sense understanding that same-sex marriage is not a civil right.

Both major minorities understand that rights must be granted

from
some superior source such as the Constitution or the Bible. To
make
same-sex marriage a 14th amendment issue would desecrate the
sacrifices of black and brown champions of yesteryear.

Further, the Bible can hardly be seen to endorse either
homosexuality or same-sex marriage. Therefore, our group
realizes
that same-sex marriage is a request for special rights. As a
result
of this kind of thinking, black and Hispanic Christian leaders
have
become uniquely aware that they are the last stronghold of
protection
for traditional, biblical marriage as we know it.

Fourth, many Americans who do not profess religious faith are
deeply concerned about the social effects of redefining
marriage.

Similar legislative decisions in Scandinavian countries in the
1990s
have been associated with skyrocketing out-of-wedlock
birthrates and
an overall decline in marriage. Common sense reminds us that
words
that mean everything mean nothing. The broader the definition
of
marriage becomes, the weaker it becomes as an institution.

This new coalition has not yet been given a formal name, but
the
concept has gripped our hearts. We have agreed to take three
immediate steps of action:

- 1.) Join in a 40-day fast through which we will beseech God to
heal the soul of our nation.

2.) Recruit a diverse group of churches around the nation to affirm traditional marriage on Father's Day (June 17). They will do this by preaching an appropriate message on marriage and by reading a declaration of commitment to defend and uphold God's first institution.

3.) Participate with the High Impact Leadership Coalition, City Action Coalition, Renewing American Leadership (ReAL), Charisma Media and the National Hispanic Leadership Conference, along with others of faith, in a "vertical vote" campaign this election season designed to inform, inspire and register groundswell Christians to vote. (More information to follow.)

In conclusion, if you want to be part of this growing coalition that transcends traditional ethnic boundaries, party lines and denominations, go to [. Click on the Stand for Marriage graphic, read the information and sign the letter to the president. Next, you should order the DVDs and CDs \(available June 7\) and take the important three steps listed above. Together, we can make the difference in our communities and nation!](#)

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