

Biblical Marriage is a Matter of Faith, Not Politics

Will President Obama's affirmation of **same-sex marriage** dilute his favorability in the Hispanic Christian community? How should Hispanic evangelicals respond? In order to answer the aforementioned queries, it's important to understand the optic that guides our community.

First, as Christians we must stand committed to reconciling the vertical Imago Dei, the image of God in every human being with the horizontal Habitus Christus, the habits and actions of Christ. This requires a new narrative, an alternative discourse where we stand for truth without sacrificing civility.

It is within this context that we express our deep disappointment in President Obama's change of position on the vitally important issue of marriage protection. Marriage has always been and should always remain the union of one man and one woman.

Even as we stand for traditional marriage, we affirm that the image of God lives in all human beings; black and white, rich and poor, straight and gay, conservative and liberal, citizen and undocumented.

Our challenge is to see the image of God in the suffering, the marginalized, the oppressed and the hurting. Our challenge is to see the image of God in every human being, including those we disagree with. Our challenge is to see the image of God in those that oppose us. Our challenge is to see the image of God even in those that persecute and slander us. Our challenge is to see the image of God in friend and foe, acquaintance and stranger, strong and weak, oppressor and liberator.

We believe this approach is biblical not political. As

Hispanic evangelicals, we stand committed to advancing not the agenda of the donkey or the elephant but only the agenda of the Lamb. The agenda of Christ is one of righteousness and justice, sanctification and service, covenant and community, holiness and humility, conviction and compassion. It is this agenda that provides the moral imperative to defend biblical truth with love and civility.

While President Obama's support of **same-sex marriage** does not reflect the sentiment of either the majority of African Americans or Hispanics and places him at odds with two segments of the electorate that celebrated his election in 2008, we must respond with both civility and conviction.

To Hispanics, our support of the biblical definition of marriage is not a matter of politics but a matter of faith. It is our faith that compels us to care for the poor and speak against injustice. It is our faith that prompts us as Hispanic evangelicals to speak out against bullying and against the persecution of gays and lesbians in Third World countries. It is our Christian faith that requires us to uphold the biblical definition of marriage as a sacred union between one man and one woman.

To our community, supporting the traditional definition of marriage is not about being anti-anyone or anything. We understand that a marriage with mom and dad in the home serves as the primary antidote against teen pregnancy, gang activity, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and many social ills.

Hence, the great concern stemming out of the President's declaration is whether or not he will pursue federal public policy initiatives that in essence redefine a sacred institution whose definition stems from natural law consistent with a Judeo-Christian Worldview. This is, of course, in addition to the recent HHS mandate that infringes on the First Amendment rights of religious organizations.

At the end of day, Hispanics are both in support of biblical marriage and against homophobia. We desire that all Americans embrace life, enjoy liberty and pursue happiness; without exception.

Yet, we also desire for our elected officials to pursue policy initiatives that advance the common good, using language that brings us together rather than tear us apart. As the Scripture commands, we will pray for President Obama, for his family and for wisdom as he leads our nation.

We will also pray that the president will defend the **religious liberties** of Americans who, because of conscience and conviction, do not view this issue via the same lens he recently engaged.

Finally, we pray that his support of gay marriage does not exacerbate the growing intolerance of a Christian worldview, which is wholeheartedly embraced by a majority of the Hispanic community.