

Donald Trump, Same-Sex 'Marriage' and the Church

If President Trump does not nominate pro-life justices to the Supreme Court, I will be surprised and disappointed, although not shocked, since I do not put my absolute trust in people, especially political leaders.

If President Trump does not oppose same-sex "marriage," I will be disappointed but not surprised.

That's why his recent comments on *60 Minutes* were disappointing but not surprising.

After all, he had his good friend Peter Thiel speak at the Republican National Convention, and Thiel was warmly received as he proudly proclaimed his gayness. Thiel is also part of the president-elect's transition team, with the potential of a high-level position within Trump's administration.

And Trump, along with Pence, has not made a major point of saying he wanted to overturn the *Obergefell* decision, instead putting his emphasis on overturning *Roe v. Wade*, sending abortion-related decisions back to the states.

Trump has also spoken of a test for immigrants regarding their attitudes toward LGBTs, so he clearly cares about their safety and well-being.

It is true, of course, that at various times in the campaign he spoke of his opposition to same-sex "marriage," even saying at least once that he would "strongly consider" appointing justices who would overturn it. But less than one week later, he assured a lesbian reporter that under his administration, there would be great progress for LGBT Americans

In short, opposition to same-sex "marriage" has never been his

mantra, nor did he emphasize this in debates, nor has he ever attempted to offer a clearly articulated answer in terms of what to do when perceived gay rights conflict with perceived religious rights.

I was not surprised, then, when he said to Lesley Stahl on *60 Minutes*, "I'm pro-life. The judges will be pro-life." And I was not surprised when, in reply to Stahl's question on same-sex "marriage," he said, "You have these cases that have already gone to the Supreme Court. They've been settled, and I'm fine with that."

Of course, I was disappointed with his answer, and I was not alone in wondering, *Why is Roe v. Wade not settled but Obergefell vs. Hodges is settled? Why should the court overturn the one and not the other?*

At the same time, there's an excellent chance that the pro-life justices President-elect Trump has promised to appoint would also stand for religious liberty and against the court's redefinition of marriage. Consequently, in the coming years, as cases reach the Supreme Court on these volatile issues, the conservative, pro-life-leaning majority would likely side against many of the goals of LGBT activism.

For me, though, there are three key takeaways from the *60 Minutes* interview. I'm speaking specifically in terms of the culture wars, not in terms of the interview as a whole.

First, as bold, strong-willed and anti-establishment as Trump may be, he is still a human being, and the temptation to "get along with everybody" in Washington is still there. We must strongly encourage him, then, not to compromise his pro-life promises for a single moment of his presidency.

He has made a sacred commitment, and it's one major reason many Christian conservatives voted for him.

Second, Christian conservatives who voted for him should not

suddenly turn on him in light of his same-sex “marriage” comments. Again, we had no reason to expect him to take a strong stand here—although that is certainly something to pray for and work for—and since he knows he owes his election to conservative evangelicals, it would be foolish for us to burn our bridges now.

His door is still open to us, and we need to do our best to walk through that open door.

Third, the president-elect’s comments remind us that it is the church’s job to change society, not the president’s.

As I have said repeatedly in recent months, Jesus never said the White House was the salt of the earth and the light of the world but rather that we, His devoted followers, were.

Of course, the president has a tremendous bully pulpit, and his comments on divisive issues influence many, just as President Obama’s “evolving” views on same-sex “marriage” influenced many. But did any of us who voted for Donald Trump really think to ourselves, “We’re voting for him because we believe he will change the moral climate of the culture and speak out against LGBT activism”? Was this even on our radar? I think not.

Either way, I didn’t vote for Trump expecting him to spark a moral and cultural revolution in America.

I voted for him with the hope that he would not do what Hillary Clinton was expected to do and with the prayer that he would keep his word regarding Supreme Court justices and make some healthy decisions for the nation as a whole.

As for transforming the culture, that is the role of the church through the many facets of the gospel.

Are we up to it?