

Samuel Rodriguez: Supreme Court Opens Door for Intolerance Against Christians

Hispanic Christians are both in support of biblical marriage and against homophobia. Today's ruling opens the door for inevitable intolerance toward people of faith who repudiate bigotry, defend the image of God in all human beings and also believe that marriage is a sacred union defined by Him.

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

For 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 with whom we disagree.

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

For Hispanic evangelicals, our support of the biblical definition of marriage is not a matter of politics, but rather 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 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.

Support of 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.

For at the end of the day, we desire that all Americans embrace life, enjoy liberty and pursue happiness—without exception. Yet the nation's highest court does not have the right to redefine an institution defined by God that is reinforced by the world's major faith narratives and traditions.

Samuel Rodriguez is president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference. He has been a featured speaker in White House and Congressional meetings on Hispanic-American issues and justice concerns and was named by CNN as "the leader of the Hispanic evangelical movement." He is an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God.