

The Light of Religious Liberty is Flickering

The managing editor of *First Things*, Emma Green, has published an important article, "Gay Rights May Come at the Cost of Religious Freedom." This is what concerned observers have been saying for years, especially in light of myriad examples of how free religious exercise has been penalized repeatedly when it conflicts with the "rights" of homosexuals (see FRC's copiously documented "Free to Believe" site for numerous examples). Just last week, Christian educational leaders from across the country joined FRC's Travis Weber and Greg Baylor of the Alliance Defending Freedom on a nationwide webcast to explore how the Supreme Court's *Obergefell* decision (finding a constitutional "right" to same-sex marriage) could well jeopardize the liberty and financial viability of religious schools and colleges. And I've just published an FRC Issue Brief on how the loss of tax exempt status could do profound harm to churches and religious organizations. Green's article begins by noting a recent ruling by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that Green called "astounding:" It says that "sexual orientation is inherently a 'sex-based consideration,' and an allegation of discrimination based on sexual orientation is necessarily an allegation of sex discrimination under Title VII." This is, as Green notes, a "big deal" because it expands the definition of sex from one of biology to one of sexual "orientation," meaning that homosexuality must now be regarded in federal law as such recognizably benign and immutable characteristics as race and ethnicity. This should come as no surprise, really. The EEOC is led by Chai Feldblum, a former Georgetown Law professor who is reported to have said in 2006, "In almost all cases the sexual liberty should win because that's the only way that the dignity of gay people can be affirmed in any realistic manner. I'm having a hard time coming up with any case in which

religious liberty should win.” Ms. Feldblum is, it would seem, as good as her word, a rare and laudable quality in the political class. Too bad that her commitment is to the side of anti-religious bigotry. Many religious leaders, most particularly evangelical Protestants and Catholics, have issued statements saying we will close our churches and schools and charities before bending the knee to any insistent demand we compromise the truth of Scripture and the self-apparent evidence of “the laws of nature and of nature’s God.” We have meant it. We continue to mean it. The cost not only to the religious but to everyone who refuses to bow to subversions of our God-given liberties would be so high as to be difficult to imagine. They would render America a nation its Founders could never have imagined, a quasi-fascist state run by the repressive and coercive elites. It’s to avoid such a fate that we will use our “tools” with all the grace, truth, courage, wisdom, and tenacity we can muster. We love our opponents too much to do otherwise.