

Open Persecution Season on Christians After Pro-Gay Rulings

Christians who speak out and stand up for traditional marriage are more likely than ever to be persecuted and even prosecuted for it.

That's because of how the majority at the U.S. Supreme Court wrote their June 26 pro-**gay marriage** rulings.

The high court majority attacked the motives of those who came up with the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996. DOMA enshrined **traditional marriage** in federal law and prevented federal benefits from going to same-sex couples.

"The avowed purpose and practical effect of the law here in question are to impose a disadvantage, a separate status, and so a stigma upon all who enter into same-sex marriages," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote in the *United States v. Windsor* ruling.

"DOMA writes inequality into the entire United States Code," he added.

According to Ken Klukowski, director of the Center for Religious Liberty, the rationale for this ruling basically undermined the motive of those for traditional marriage only.

"The court said that the federal **Defense of Marriage Act** is literally irrational, that it was just the fruit of bigotry and beknighted souls rather than the thoughtful actions of elected, national leaders," he said.

Rep. Gerald Nadler, D-N.Y., agreed with Justice Kennedy, summing up the majority's judgment of DOMA as being "motivated by animus."

"Animus means hatred and discrimination," the New York lawmaker said. "It says there was no conceivable legitimate purpose of the law."

DOMA passed in Congress with huge majorities, but Klukowski said the high court has now decided "that 85 percent of Congress in passing it and Democratic President Bill Clinton signing it into law were not motivated by any sound reason, by any rational thought whatsoever, that they were motivated either by ignorance or by hostility."

Stage Set for Persecution?

Such talk by the nation's highest court will likely propel pro-homosexual rights groups and pro-gay government officials to go after backers of traditional marriage harder than ever.

"There's absolutely a growing threat under this administration and under this court," Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, told CBN News.

"I think what Justice Kennedy did in his opinion was basically assign a false motive to those who are opposed to the redefinition of natural marriage, acting as if they were a threat to people, therefore declaring open season," Perkins stated.

"And I think you will see open hostility, increasing open hostility," he predicted. "I mean, we've seen very recent gay pride events where there were Christians beaten because they took a stand for biblical morality."

Thomas Peters, communications director for the National Organization for Marriage, says up until now, action against traditional marriage backers has mostly come at the state level, and cases have been piling up in recent years.

Peters listed some.

"The Colorado baker who right now could spend a year in jail

for refusing to give a wedding cake to a gay ceremony, or the town clerks in New York who had to resign their jobs because they simply asked that someone else in the office would sign the same-sex marriage licenses so that they wouldn't have to do it," he said.

"Or the wedding photographer in New Mexico who's been fined thousands of dollars simply for saying she didn't want to photograph a gay ceremony," he continued.

There's likely to be much more of this kind of legal action if America's neighbor to the north can serve as an example. Same-sex marriage came to Canada in 2005. In a recent five-year period there, 200 to 300 cases against opponents of gay marriage were brought before courts, human rights commissions, and employment boards.

Now, Perkins expects a steep rise in cases across the United States and he said that's going to have a major impact on America.

"This is about fundamentally altering the American society," Perkins stated, "**loss of religious freedom**, loss of parental rights, employers—bakers, photographers, florists—being forced to participate by threat of law in same-sex marriages."

Florist Refuses Gay Couple

One such florist in Washington state has made national news. In March, Barronelle Stutzman refused to supply the flowers for the gay wedding of longtime customers Curt Freed and Robert Ingersoll because of her Christian beliefs.

Freed and Ingersoll weren't going to take any legal actions, but Washington's state attorney general went after Stutzman anyway.

Peters summed up Stutzman's case.

"She said, 'I will happily serve you as individuals, but I

don't believe in gay weddings, so I'm not going to do your wedding ceremony,'" he said. "The attorney general and the ACLU colluded to sue her with civil and criminal penalties. This is just a gross overreach of power."

In state after state that's voted to legalize gay marriage, religious opponents have been promised they wouldn't face legal action because of their opposition.

But Peters said of the legal action against Stutzman, "It's exactly what the same officials promised would never, ever happen if you redefined marriage. We saw only a few months later those promises meant nothing."

Gay Activists: Passivity = Bigotry

Peters and Perkins point out these days the most active of gay rights activists demand affirmation from everyone in society. And these activists suggest it's anti-gay to do anything less than show full support for them.

Standing outside the U.S. Supreme Court after its pro-gay marriage rulings in June, Chad Griffin, with the leading homosexual rights group the Human Rights Campaign, stated, "At this moment, apathy and passivity are no better than bigotry."

For instance, an email went to Department of Justice managers this spring saying they should display a gay pride symbol in their office. It instructed when it comes to gays, "Don't judge or remain silent. Silence will be interpreted as disapproval."

Many worry what will happen to federal workers who believe homosexuality is unbiblical. Some military members have already run into trouble.

Retired Col. Ron Crews, a former chaplain, told CBN News of two Christians having Bible study in their Post Exchange food court, reading Romans 1—a chapter that condemns homosexual behavior.

“Two tables over, a soldier heard them, came up to them and started cursing at them for talking ‘about him,’” Crews said. “And then called an MP over, wanted to reprimand them for talking ‘about him,’ while all they were doing was reading Scripture.”

Crews talked to an Air Force officer who’d had a Bible on his desk for 23 years with no complaints from anyone—until he arrived at a new location.

“His superior officer told him, ‘You cannot put your Bible on the desk because it may offend someone,’” Crews said.

A Blow to Military Readiness?

Retired Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin, a former Delta Force commander who’s now executive vice president of the Family Research Council, warned the military depends on patriotic people of faith to fill its ranks.

“When young men and women across America are told that they must leave their faith at the door when they come into our military, they will not be allowed to practice their faith—then they’re not going to come into our military,” Boykin said. “And our military readiness will decline as a result of it.”

Peters added that even civilian pastors could face trouble in the future if they serve as civil ministers marrying couples and they won’t do gay weddings.

“In the same way that tax status could be threatened,” Peters said, “ministerial exemptions could be threatened as well if we continue to embed this false idea into law that standing for marriage equates with bigotry.”