

A Response to the Recent Rulings of the United States Supreme Court regarding Marriage

While the decision of the court is not a complete surprise we were hoping for more than a ruling aligned with the popular opinion of our culture. Many of the basic tenets of our legal system are rooted in biblical principles. The laws of our nation were once established on transcendent truth and not simply what citizens were willing to tolerate. Contemporary decisions seem to be based on only the most recent cases, philosophies and political will. The historical foundation and connection to biblical principles is seldom raised or followed. The prevailing attitude is that the wisdom of man in contemporary culture is far superior to the wisdom of God.

There are few in our culture bold enough to speak out against the slow erosion of the Biblical understanding of marriage and the family that each of these decisions bring. The recent decisions of the Supreme Court should cause us to raise some important questions. We believe in equality and justice for all people, but can justice be separated from righteousness? Can one speak out for the biblical understanding of justice without also speaking out for the biblical understanding of righteousness? Can acceptance and tolerance of behaviors in opposition to the Word and will of God be considered equal to those behaviors that are in agreement with scriptural teaching?

We must never simply acquiesce to such rulings but engage in constructive dialog, consistent prayer, biblical study, loving obedience to Christ and faithful caring for our neighbor. Our response is grounded in the Great Commission, making disciples obedient to Christ, teaching the faith and trusting in the constant presence of Jesus. We must remain all the more committed to influence our culture and the world by faithfully proclaiming Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world, boldly living what we confess.

While our pastors and congregations will not participate in the blessing of same sex unions and continue to uphold in our preaching and teaching the Biblical standards for marriage and sexuality, we have an even more positive word to offer. I commend to you the ecumenical statement on marriage and the family. (<http://thenalc.org/educational-resources/>) This is a perfect time for our pastors to preach and teach about the biblical understanding of marriage and the family making full use of both the Old and New Testament references. I am confident that our pastors and congregations in the NALC will continue to boldly proclaim God's truth in love, offering the forgiveness, mercy and healing that only Christ can provide. We will continue to pray for all men, women and children affected by these decisions as well as those responsible for making them.

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Bishop John F. Bradosky June 28, 2013