

may not be born-again Christians.

These studies also indicate that many Christians approve of homosexuality, including born-again Christians and ministers. But if you firmly believe the truth spoken in the Bible, that God created male and female, you would not accept homosexual unions. Now that same-sex marriage has been legalized, to adhere to the one-man-one-woman definition of marriage only will mean more and worse challenges and difficulties for us ahead. Compromise? Conscience won't allow it. Accept it? No way. So this will be a tremendous struggle Christians must face. Some already predicted that Christianity will become marginalized in our society, which is certainly possible. If we continue to concede, our spiritual inheritance will gradually vanish. But if we can stand our ground, God will honor the price His children pay for standing up for His truth. Most importantly, we must examine 1) what we believe: doctrine, the content of our faith; and 2) who we believe: Jesus, who we put our faith in. Paul said, "That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." (2 Tim. 1:12) We will suffer for Jesus who we believe, but we are not ashamed, knowing He will guard us and keep us all the way till the end.

What must we do

First we must be sure of this: the Supreme Court did not re-define marriage. It only gave homosexuals the right and freedom to marry. Justice Anthony Kennedy expressed in the court majority opinion, "The right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty." But if the presumption for exercising that right is wrong, consequently the conclusion will be wrong too. Though the court decision legalized gay marriage, but the definition of marriage remains the same: a union between one man and one woman. That is the principle we must adhere to, the unchanging definition for marriage.

Second, the warnings from the four dissenting Justices are worth noting. Chief Justice John Roberts stated, "But this Court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us. Under the Constitution, judges have power to say what the law is, not what it should be. ..." The majority violated the principle of stating "what the law is", and instead dictated "what the law should be" based solely on their individual opinions. Roberts also refuted that "If there is dignity in the bond between two men or two women who seek to marry ... why would there be any less dignity in the bond between three people who, in exercising their autonomy, seek to make the profound choice to marry?" What he was most concerned with is religious freedom. He pointed out that the majority suggested that religious believers may continue to advocate and teach their views of marriage, but hard questions arise with the new right to same-sex marriage - when, for example when they exercise religion in ways that may seem to

conflict with the new right to same-sex marriage - when, for example, a religious college denies housing to same-sex married couples, or the tax exemptions of some religious institutions would be in question if they opposed same-sex marriage. Those would include the church as well. How will the church respond to this impending challenge?

Justice Clarence Thomas also agreed that the new law will inevitably create conflicts, "In our society, marriage is not simply a governmental institution; it is a religious institution as well. ... Today's decision might change the former, but it cannot change the latter." That is so well said and very true. How can five human beings change the institution of marriage ordained by God since creation as a union between one man and one woman? Then he continued, "It appears all but inevitable that the two will come into conflict, particularly as individuals and churches are confronted with demands to participate in and endorse civil marriages between same-sex couples." When the majority is granting homosexuals their right and liberty to marry, it is concurrently denying the religious right and liberty of Christians to oppose such practice. We must be prepared to face such a peculiar contradiction.

Justice Antonin Scalia thinks this new law threatens American democracy. To him, this ruling is not as immensely important as "who it is that rules me. Today's decree says that my Ruler, and the Ruler of 320 million Americans coast-to-coast, is a majority of the nine lawyers on the Supreme Court." When the fate of all Americans is determined by five persons, or in actuality one person, in the Supreme Court, can we accept that?

Justice Samuel Alito was worried that this decision "will be used to vilify Americans who are unwilling to assent to the new orthodoxy. In the course of its opinion, the majority compares traditional marriage laws to laws that denied equal treatment for African-Americans and women. The implications of this analogy will be exploited by those who are determined to stamp out every vestige of dissent." He feared that "those who cling to old beliefs will be able to whisper their thoughts in the recesses of their homes, but if they repeat those views in public, they will risk being labeled as bigots and treated as such by governments, employers, and schools."

Every one of the four dissenting Justices expressed their opinions and disapproval of how the five Justices majority in the Supreme Court determined the fate of all Americans with this ruling. I have only listed one or two sentences representative of their opinions to remind us how we must stand firm in the truth and defend the one-man-one-woman, one-husband-one-wife, for-one-life-time institution of marriage ordained by God under the shadow of this new law, and fight the good fight for God's truth to prevail in these end times.

(Note: Rev Liu was the Senior Pastor of CBCM and retired in January 2014.)

CrossTalk

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Reflections on Supreme Court Ruling Legalizing
Same-Sex Marriage
By Rev. Jonathan Chuanchang Liu

Introduction

Was the dawn of June 26th too sudden? Too shocking? No, it was certain. I am not saying I agree with it. I am saying those who were surprised by it caught on too late. As early as 2013 when this case was first debated in the Supreme Court, there were thousands of Christians alongside others opposing same-sex marriage gathering outside the court house to voice their protest. With such a small number, I doubted God could hear us (of course I am exaggerating). Where were most of the Christians then? Now the case has been decided, it is too late to cry foul. We must repent, and think about what we should do in response to this situation. I will try to reflect upon this from seven perspectives as follows.

Politically

When the Supreme Court announced its ruling to legalize same-sex marriage, the color of the U.S. White House changed that night - the White House became the Rainbow House. The seven-colored light shone on the White House, whose 42 previous residents (not counting Washington who never lived there) had always supported heterosexual marriage between one man and one woman, and White House was no more. According to Obama, the change of color was considered a victory. But he should not have used the White House of the people to proclaim his personal political view. I am glad the founding fathers did not name it the White Palace, as what the Chinese people call it, with an imbued imperial notion that an emperor has dominion from within. No, it is only a residence for the President, who has no ownership of it. It is a symbol of the country, representing the people of the United States. If it is a House of the people, then it's not a place for a President's personal agenda.

Speaking of White House changing colors, the decision of the Supreme Court to legalize same-sex marriage is totally a political one. Out of the nine Justices, four are liberal, four are conservative, and one is the swing vote. Those opposing

same-sex marriage have lost this battle this time because he voted against them (us). Before June 26th, many have tried to predict which side the deciding vote by Justice Kennedy would swing to, some were already certain he will swing left. And not surprisingly, the result confirmed what they were already expecting.

In fact, homosexuality (abbreviated H hereafter) is a political issue. Very few are homosexual, but they have very big political voice with the support of liberal media. Over the last 10 plus years, H has been a hot potato politicians not dare to touch. When Obama first ran for president, he publicly professed his view of marriage to be between a man and a woman. After he won the presidency, however, he realized he could not have won without the votes of homosexuals. So he started favoring the homosexuals, forgetting his own view of marriage between a man and a woman. When asked why his view changed like that, he said it was evolving. H is a weighty topic in American politics, even the more conservative Republican Presidential candidates also acquiesced to the new edicts. H is also very influential in the political circle, and the support (or lack of) from the President plays a vital role as well. Even the Supreme Court Justices have their own political views about H that led to the 5 to 4 vote, as can be seen from the June 26th ruling. Remember, out of the current nine Justices, former President George W. Bush appointed two conservatives, but Obama appointed two liberals who voted for legalizing same-sex marriage. Therefore, the Presidency and H issues are very closely related. After the Supreme Court ruling, what should our political mind set be?

For us, the Chinese immigrants in America, what is on our minds? Do we just hope to get the highest academic degrees, earn the most amount of money, buy the best house and car, live in the best school district, and send our children to the best college, then retire to live out our lives in comfort?

Rev Liu reflects
on Same Sex
Marriage:
...for Chinese
immigrants,
what are our
thoughts?...

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EXALTING JESUS CHRIST

EDIFYING THE BELIEVERS

EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

We have no interest in politics, unconcerned and ignorant, never paying attention to the ups and downs of the country that we live in. Needless to say, we cannot blame others for the June 26th outcome. I read somewhere that this ruling is permanent, but I don't think so. These things change with the political scene. The Presidential election is coming up next year. The fate of America, as well as yours and mine, depends on who we elect into office. Therefore, we cannot afford to be indifferent any more, we must pray earnestly for God to reign and choose a President who is after God's own heart to lead the nation. God's people must also fulfill their responsibility as citizens of this country, cast their ballots, vote for the candidate who is after God's own heart, who will walk on a path pleasing to God. Moreover, Christians must be proactive and be involved politically, run for mayor, governor, congressman, senator, and even President if born here. A Christian mind set should not be withdrawal, but put up a good fight. When it comes to important national issues, Christians often choose to take a back seat, not speaking out nor fighting for what is right. If we Christians don't speak up, who will speak up for us? If we are silent before man in these political battles, our prayers for this will not be heard by God either (God hears our prayers because He wants us to fight in His battles).

Religiously

Even before the Supreme Court's ruling, some pastors already announced that their church will accept homosexuals as members, including the City Church of San Francisco and Stan Mitchell's Gracepointe Church. The trend has started, and is gradually gathering force like a giant wave, it will be very difficult to turn back the tide. Many pastors, unable to withstand the fierce attack, will succumb to it and surrender. The tremendous pressure they will face is not difficult to imagine or understand, but to bow our knees to Baal must not be God's will for us. When are we to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to us, God's people? Isn't it now since our faith and the truth of God's Word is under attack? God originally created man in His own image. He created male and female in His image (Gen 1:27), and made them husband and wife (Gen 2:24-25). When we talk about marriage, what other truth is there?

Pontius Pilate once asked Jesus, "What is truth?" (John 18:38) With that he walked away, never intended to hear Jesus' answer to learn what truth is. People today don't want to know what truth is either, they don't think truth exists. The Post-Modernist claims nothing is absolute, therefore there can be no truth. If there's no absolute truth, then everyone is his own truth, he can love whomever he wants. But we have the Truth. When our belief in the Truth is challenged or even overturned, we are to stand firm, not surrender. We do accept people who used to be homosexual, but he must repent and turn away from evil practice, and leave his same-sex partner. If he wants to marry, he must marry someone of the opposite sex, and he will receive our blessings. That is our stand, our definition of marriage, and pastors must be prepared to be sued in court. When such a day comes, our faith will be under trial. A Mexican bishop Gustavo Rodriguez Vega "issued his own declaration along with the clergy of his diocese, assuring the faithful that he will suffer imprisonment rather than cooperate with such unions. ... 'we won't give it a blessing.'"

We must be prepared to pay the price for our faith. Are we willing to be the seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal? Or Jezebel's four hundred fifty false prophets who are under the king's protection? The choice is not easy. As Martin Luther faced a life-and-death situation when he was summoned before the Roman Emperor to recant his belief, he said "Here I Stand!" Standing on the Truth of God. Under the pressure of the new ruling, where will you stand?

Socially

After WWII, America and the world faced enormous change. Some say "four B's" totally changed the American society: atomic bomb, baby boomers, birth control, and boob tube (e.g. television). These changed how we lived in the latter half of the 20th century. Atomic bomb made people realize life was fleetingly short, wild celebrations ensued following the war victory as if there was no tomorrow. Baby boomers are the largest population group in America. They are also the group that left the American church. They are born after WWII, grew up in a bourgeoning economy. While they enjoyed an affluent life style, they became bored with their parents' old-fashioned religion, and left the mainstream church one by one. Then the birth control pill was invented, and at about the same time sexual liberation was running amok, with women's liberation movement at its heels. All of these threw society into chaos: sex everywhere, divorce rate shot up, families broken with no love or care for the young. Many couples devoted themselves to work, neglecting kids whose only companion was a television set. At that time, homosexuals were already around, but they were in hiding because the society had not shown signs of acceptance, until the Clinton era when they began to show themselves. After 8 years of suppression under President Bush, finally Obama made them shine - even the White House changed colors to welcome the Rainbow banner's "triumph."

We must understand that our society is constantly changing. Just like the Chinese saying "shrewd is the man who understands the times", we must know our time. Throughout history, we can see American society was always undergoing drastic change. For example, when I came to America in the early seventies last century, after the funeral service we would have a procession of cars driving from the funeral home to the cemetery. Back then, those cars with their flashing lights on could even travel through red lights while all the other drivers patiently waited until the whole convoy was through. But that's no longer the case. Some drivers would recklessly cut through a funeral car procession now a day. Why? Though America did not build its foundation upon Christianity, but without a doubt the Bible has profoundly influenced this land, as evident in their respect for life and their courteous manners. However, these American civilities were gradually lost with the growing influx of immigrants. Formerly a melting pot, where new immigrants assimilated into its Anglo-Saxon culture, now America has become a salad bowl, where recent immigrants of complex ethnic backgrounds has each retained their own language, culture, customs, ways of life, and will

*Mexican bishop and his clergy: We will go to jail rather than bless gay 'marriages', by Matthew Cullinan Hoffman, [https://](https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/mexican-bishop-and-his-clergy-we-will-go-to-jail-rather-than-bless-gay-marr)

www.lifesitenews.com/news/mexican-bishop-and-his-clergy-we-will-go-to-jail-rather-than-bless-gay-marr, Thu Jun 25, 2015 - 12:55 pm EST.

fight for their own interests. With a society as diverse as America is now, everyone has to learn to accommodate one another, and surely the homosexuals will demand their rights as well.

In this diverse and complex society, Christians are no longer respected in all things as before. As the anti-Christian force grows more powerful, the path of Christians will ever be narrower: the Bible taken out of public schools, prayers not allowed, the cross slandered. For now, Christians still have a foothold in this society, but what will it be like in the future? No one can predict. Let us be children of the wise, stand tall and firm in a society that resists God, patiently endure, never compromise, and when necessary pay the price for our faith.

Ecclesiastically

The Church should be the vanguard of the times, leading the society, not trailing behind social issues, like what we do now. After the June 26th ruling, there came a public declaration signed by over one hundred American ministers (including pastors and seminary professors) "Here We Stand: An Evangelical Declaration on Marriage", in which they only stated from a positive angle their view of marriage to be strictly a union between one man and one woman, without mentioning where they stand on the issue of homosexuality at all. Even more strangely, other than that, so far I have not seen anyone else, especially pastors of mega-churches, publicly expressing their opinions about this ruling. Does that mean they agree with the ruling, or are afraid of trouble? The prophetic voice is missing in the American church. Where is our Elijah? Where is our John the Baptist? At a time when Baal worshipping was rampant, Elijah said to King Ahab who was the reason for Baal worship in Israel, "But you and your father's family have [made trouble for Israel]. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed Baal." (1 Kings 18:18) He knew he'd probably be killed, but he said it anyway, just like John the Baptist. For truth, for their beliefs, they can care less about being humiliated or death. After Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, John the Baptist went to Herod and said, "It is not lawful for you to have her" (Matt. 14:3-4), and John was later beheaded because of it.

Today, a pastor of a mega-church could not or dare not be the spokesperson for his generation, to proclaim prophetic messages, call out to the sinful world, and endeavor to turn the tide. The church needs a prophetic voice. We need an Elijah and a John the Baptist in this generation. Besides, the church is the light in a dark world, and the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15). In a warped and crooked generation, the church of Christ is the clarion of the time, and the gospel is the power of God. In the 90's when multitudes of overseas students from Mainland China flocked to American campuses, the church was very effective among them. Thousands of students who grew up as atheists in a communist society became believers of the gospel message. Some believed as soon as they heard the gospel for the very first time. Why? Because the gospel "is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). If the church has such a powerful "weapon" that can change man's heart, we can wield its power against the flood that comes. Though the devil may seem to prevail now, we need not be dismayed, because ultimately the truth of God will triumph. Let us pick up the pace, take the gospel to the world, especially to the unreached people groups. The homosexuals are such an unreached people group. I truly hope the church can formulate a good strategy for ministry among the homosexuals, find an effective way to reach them.

Family

While growing up, family plays the most important role in our lives. Proverbs says, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (22:6) This promise of "when he is old he will not turn from it" has a conditional clause - to train the child. We are born sinners. According to David, we are already sinners in the mother's womb (Psalms 51:5). Without training, we'll certainly go our sinful ways. Training a child is not the responsibility of the school, but a responsibility of the family, of the parents. With this ruling by the Supreme Court, all the text books in all the public schools in all 50 states will need to be re-written now.

Actually, gone already from many official school forms were the entries for names of "father" and "mother", replaced by names of "guardian". But now even the sexual distinction is gone - it's possible now both guardians belong to the same sex, yet neither of them is quite like a father or a mother. Gone also is the liberty to name activities as a "girl's" activity or a "boy's" activity in school, lest one be accused of discrimination. All the values of the traditional family are in danger of being obliterated under the new trend. How will our children survive in such an environment? If we the parents do not start early to instill our beliefs and principles in our children well before they are school age, they will lose their way a lot worse than the mistakes we make today. If you have young children at home, now is the time to re-arrange your priorities. Many years ago, I already encouraged both parents not to work at the same time. Money is easy to make and useful to have, but it's only temporary. Besides, what good will it be for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his children? What can he give in exchange for his children's childhood, youth, and lives? As we face imminent peril, parents must wake up and save our children out of tigers' lair. Teach your children to know right from wrong -- because God ordained marriage to be between one man and one woman, so that is the only right union of marriage, anything else is wrong. Parents should also model for their children what God's design for marriage looks like, to love and complement each other, raise children together in a home full of joy and harmony. With such a high divorce rate among heterosexual couples, no wonder homosexuals look down on us. It's time we wake up and work on our marriage relationships, to draw our children back to us to taste how sweet the love of a father and a mother is.

Personally

A recent study by Pew Research shows that Christian population in America has gone down from 78% to 70%. The alarming decrease made the church very uneasy. Further analysis shows the 8% lost were nominal Christians. As the times change, they no longer want to be Christians if being a Christian is not popular any more. This tells us that people who are active in church