

## **PLEDGE IN SOLIDARITY TO DEFEND MARRIAGE!**

We stand together in defense of marriage and the family and society founded upon them. While we come from a variety of communities and hold differing faith perspectives, we are united in our common affirmation of marriage.

On the matter of marriage, we stand in solidarity. We affirm that marriage and family have been inscribed by the Divine Architect into the order of Creation.

Marriage is ontologically between one man and one woman, ordered toward the union of the spouses, open to children and formative of family. Family is the first vital cell of society, the first government, and the first mediating institution of our social order. The future of a free and healthy society passes through marriage and the family.

Marriage as existing solely between one man and one woman precedes civil government. Though affirmed, fulfilled, and elevated by faith, the truth that marriage can exist only between one man and one woman is not based on religion or revelation alone, but on the Natural Law, written on the human heart and discernible through the exercise of reason. It is part of the natural created order.

The Natural Law is what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., referred to as a higher law or a just law in his famous Letter from Birmingham Jail.

Marriage is the preeminent and the most fundamental of all human social institutions. Civil institutions do not create marriage nor can they manufacture a right to marry for those who are incapable of marriage. Society begins with marriage and the family.

We pledge to stand together to defend marriage for what it is, a bond between one man and one woman, intended for life, and open to the gift of children. The institutions of civil government should defend marriage and not seek to undermine it. Government has long regulated marriage for the true common good.

Examples, such as the age of consent, demonstrate such a proper regulation to ensure the free and voluntary basis of the marriage bond. Redefining the very institution of marriage is improper and outside the authority of the State. No civil institution, including the United States Supreme Court or any court, has authority to redefine marriage.

As citizens united together, we will not stand by while the destruction of the institution of marriage unfolds in this nation we love. The effort to redefine marriage threatens the essential foundation of the family.

Experience and history have shown us that if the government redefines marriage to grant a legal equivalency to same-sex couples, that same government will then

enforce such an action with the police power of the State. This will bring about an inevitable collision with religious freedom and conscience rights. The precedent established will leave no room for any limitation on what can constitute such a redefined notion of marriage or human sexuality. We cannot and will not allow this to occur on our watch. Religious freedom is the first freedom in the American experiment for good reason.

Conferring a moral and legal equivalency to any relationship other than marriage between a man and a woman, by legislative or judicial fiat, sends the message that children do not need a mother and a father. As a policy matter, such unions convey the message that moms and dads are completely irrelevant to the well-being of children. Such a policy statement is unconscionable and destructive. Authorizing the legal equivalency of marriage to same-sex couples undermines the fundamental rights of children and threatens their security, stability, and future.

Neither the United States Supreme Court nor any court has authority to redefine marriage and thereby weaken both the family and society. Unlike the Legislative Branch that has the power of the purse and the Executive Branch which has the figurative power of the sword, the Judicial Branch has neither. It must depend upon the Executive Branch for the enforcement of its decisions.

As the Supreme Court acknowledged in the 1992 decision of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, its power rests solely upon the legitimacy of its decisions in the eyes of the people. If the decisions of the Court are not based on the Constitution and reason, and especially if they are contrary to the natural created order, then the people will lose confidence in the Court as an objective arbiter of the law. If the people lose respect for the Court, the Court's authority will be diminished.

The Supreme Court was wrong when it denied Dred Scott his rights and said, "blacks are inferior human beings." And the Court was wrong when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in *Buck v. Bell*, "three generations of imbeciles are enough," thus upholding Virginia's eugenics law that permitted forced sterilization. Shamefully, that decision was cited during the Nuremburg trials to support the Nazi eugenic holocaust.

In these earlier cases, the definition of "human" was at issue. Now the definition of "marriage" is at issue. The Constitution does not grant a right to redefine marriage — which is nonsensical since marriage intrinsically involves a man and a woman. Nor does the Constitution prohibit states from affirming the natural created order of male and female joined together in marriage.

We will view any decision by the Supreme Court or any court the same way history views the Dred Scott and *Buck v. Bell* decisions. Our highest respect for the rule of law requires that we not respect an unjust law that directly conflicts with higher law. A decision purporting to redefine marriage flies in the face of the Constitution and is contrary to the natural created order. As people of faith we pledge obedience

to our Creator when the State directly conflicts with higher law. We respectfully warn the Supreme Court not to cross this line.

We stand united together in defense of marriage. Make no mistake about our resolve. While there are many things we can endure, redefining marriage is so fundamental to the natural order and the common good that this is the line we must draw and one we cannot and will not cross.

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