



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on June 26, 2013

## U.S. Pastors, Christian Leaders Pledge to Stand Strong for Marriage

On June 20, as the nation waited for a ruling from the Supreme Court on a pair of cases that could change how Americans view marriage, a group of over 200 Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox clergy and Christian leaders released a signed pledge vowing to “stand in solidarity to defend marriage and the family and society founded upon them. The “[Marriage Solidarity Statement](#),” drafted by Keith Fournier, editor of [Catholic Online](#), and Mat Staver, chairman of [Liberty Counsel Action](#), acknowledges that while there are differences between the signers on some significant matters of religious doctrine and practice, “on the matter of marriage, we stand in solidarity.” The pledge was vetted among hundreds of pastors and Christian leaders across the nation, and was ultimately signed by a group of clergy and leaders who arguably represent tens of millions of Christians across America.



“As a nation, we have lost our moral compass,” the Christian leaders declare in their solemn pledge. “As a result, we are losing true freedom. We affirm together that there is a moral basis to a free society. Though we live in a secular society, together we reject relativism and secularism.”

They go on to 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 church, first school, first hospital, first economy, first government and first mediating institution of our social order. The future of a free and healthy society passes through marriage and the family.”

While noting that the Supreme Court is poised to render verdicts on the future of two major marriage cases — [Proposition 8 in California](#) and the federal [Defense of Marriage Act](#) — the leaders affirm that marriage predates government and stands above the judgments and mandates of civil institutions, including the U.S. Supreme Court. “Redefining the very institution of marriage is improper and outside the authority of the State,” the pledge reads. “The Supreme Court has no authority to redefine marriage.”

Should the High Court become “the tool by which marriage is redefined in the positive law of this nation,” the statement continues, “the precedent established will leave no room for any limitation on what can constitute such a redefined notion of marriage. Conferring a moral and legal equivalency to same-sex couples by legislative or judicial fiat also sends the message that children do not need a



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mother and a father. It undermines their fundamental rights and threatens their security, stability, and future.”

The statement recalls that in its 1992 *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* abortion ruling, the High Court acknowledged that its power is ultimately based upon the legitimacy of its decisions in the eyes of the nation’s citizens. “If the Supreme Court were to issue a decision that redefined marriage or provided a precedent on which to build an argument to redefine marriage,” the statement read, “the Supreme Court will thereby undermine its legitimacy. The Court will significantly decrease its credibility and impair the role it has assumed for itself as a moral authority. It will be acting beyond its proper constitutional role and contrary to the Natural Moral Law which transcends religions, culture, and time.”

“As Christians united together in defense of marriage,” conclude the clergy, “we pray that this will not happen. But, 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 true common good that this is the line we must draw and one we cannot and will not cross.”

Keith Fournier, one of the statement’s principal architects, noted that the institution of marriage between a man and a woman predates the Christian Church. “Though affirmed, fulfilled, and elevated by Christian teaching, 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 Moral Law, written on the human heart and discernible through the exercise of reason,” he said. “Civil institutions do not create marriage nor can they manufacture a right to marry for those who are incapable of marriage. 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 and does not serve the common good of society.”

Among the high-profile clergy and Christian leaders signing on to the marriage statement were: Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council; Dr. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family; Dr. Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention; Don Wildmon, founder of the American Family Association; Gary Bauer, president of American Values; Penny Nance, president of Concerned Women for America; Al Kresta, president of Ave Maria Radio; Father Frank Pavone, president of Priests for Life; and world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Benjamin Carson.

[Click Here](#) to read the statement in full and for a list of all the signers.



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