

1. Marriage was not created, defined and instituted by the Supreme Court, and therefore it cannot be changed by the Supreme Court. The reality of marriage (one man and one woman), instituted by God does not change. The true church will not surrender on this. While I doubt that many of us were shocked by the Supreme Court ruling, we are most definitely grieved. However, our confidence is in a sovereign and eternal God whose decrees and law will stand long after the Supreme Court of the United States is nothing more than a page in a history book of a by-gone era.

2. The Bible warns in the most serious terms possible about the fate of those who add to the Scriptures or who take-away from the Scriptures. The consequences of rejecting God's Word are more than political, cultural and legal; they are personal. We will not stand with the Supreme Court, or any court or ruling body that foolishly stands in opposition to the Supreme Judge. Our conscience is held captive by the Word of God and thus our souls are free.

3. The Bible warns against nations that celebrate what God abhors. In yet another way, America is further standing in arrogant defiance against the Creator. This is a dangerous place to be. Pray for God's mercy for the United States of America.

4. Our nation has now defined us as, at best, outside the mainstream of American opinion. That is ok. The truth is, we believe even stranger things. We believe that God came to earth and was born of a virgin and that he died and was raised again. We believe that he returned to heaven and that is coming back on a horse. Yea, we really believe that! We also believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ can rescue and change people from sinners under condemnation to citizens of God's kingdom who will rule and reign with Jesus. We are being told that we are on the wrong side of history. We may be on the wrong side of this fad, but we are not on the wrong of history, for history is nothing more than His Story. But, being on the wrong side of fads is nothing new. Jesus was outlawed too. But Rome could not find a way to keep him in the grave. Christianity has always been counter to culture. While this is a new experience for us, we're simply joining the experience of our brothers and sisters throughout history and around the world. Indeed, as they have learned, the Lord has his purposes even in that. Light is never more conspicuous and compelling than when it shines in the deepest darkness.

5. This is not a defeat for God. His purpose has been to glorify Jesus Christ, by building a kingdom of brothers and sisters from all over the world who follow Christ no matter what and even this new reality he will use ultimately to that end.

6. Therefore, our mission as a church is the same as it ever was – to declare the Gospel of the Savior, Jesus Christ, and make disciples of him. The greatest need of humans is salvation through Christ and worship of God. In building a community upon that we are a counter-cultural testimony to God's truth in the midst of a society that has turned decisively against Him. We are to be the aroma of life amidst the stench of death. One of our tasks is to preserve and seek opportunities to demonstrate God-glorifying marriage.

7. We do not know the implications of this for religious liberty. I am not optimistic and yet we ought to pray for continued religious liberty in America, and also remember that the Gospel does not *need* religious liberty in order to spread and flourish, and in fact it has not often had it throughout history. Jesus promised, “This gospel of the kingdom *will be preached* in all nations,” and “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.” That is still true.

8. To your friends who will celebrate this ruling, speak with truth and love. You do not have to celebrate, but neither will it be fruitful to be marked by anger. Respond to questions with calm conviction and the truth and hope of the gospel.

9. The winds of culture are in our face, but the breath of God is at our back. The die is cast. Our citizenship is in heaven. We have cast our anchor upon another shore. This ship has sailed and we will not turn back and neither will we go under.

Greg Gilbert and Russ Moore helped frame some of the ideas and language of this.