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‘We will not obey’: Christian leaders threaten civil disobedience if Supreme Court legalizes gay marriage

By Todd Starnes

(This article was originally published on FoxNews.com on April 28, 2015.)

“We will not obey.”

That’s the blunt warning a group of prominent religious leaders is sending to the Supreme Court of the United States as they consider same-sex marriage.

“We respectfully warn the Supreme Court not to cross that line,” read a document titled, [Pledge in Solidarity to Defend Marriage](#). “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,” the pledge states.

The signees are a who’s who of religious leaders including former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum, National Religious Broadcasters president Jerry Johnson, Pastor John Hagee, and Franklin Graham, president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan’s Purse.

[The pledge](#) was co-drafted by Deacon Keith Fournier, a Catholic deacon, and Mat Staver, the founder of Liberty Counsel. Also involved in the document were Rick Scarborough, the president of Vision America Action, and James Dobson, the founder of Family Talk Radio.

“We’re sending a warning to the Supreme Court and frankly any court that crosses the line on the issue of marriage,” Staver told me.

He said that once same-sex marriage is elevated to the level of protected status, it will transform the face of society and will result in the “beginning of the end of Western civilization.”



“You are essentially saying that boys and girls don’t need moms and dads—that moms and dads are irrelevant,” Staver said. “Gender becomes pointless when government adopts same-sex marriage. It creates a genderless relationship out of a very gender-specific relationship. It says that it doesn’t matter and that two moms or two dads are absolutely equivalent to a mom and a dad.”

Dobson said the legalization of same-sex marriage could fracture the nation.

“The institution of marriage is fundamental and it must be defended,” he told me. “It’s the foundation for the entire culture. It’s been in existence for 5,000 years. If you weaken it or if you undermine it, the entire superstructure can come down. We see it as that important.”

And that means the possibility of Christians—people of faith—engaging in acts of civil disobedience.

“Yes, I’m talking about civil disobedience,” Staver said. “I’m talking about resistance and I’m talking about peaceful resistance against unjust laws and unjust rulings.”

That’s quite a shocking statement. So I asked Mr. Staver to clarify his remarks.

“I’m calling for people to not recognize the legitimacy of that ruling because it’s not grounded in the Rule of Law,” he told me. “They need to resist that ruling in every way possible. In a peaceful way, they need to resist it as much as Martin Luther King, Jr. resisted unjust laws in his time.”

Scarborough said the pledge was meant to be forthright and clear.

“We’re facing a real Constitutional crisis if the Supreme Court rules adversely from our perspective on same-sex marriage,” he told me. “For me there’s no option. I’m going to choose to serve the Lord. And I think that thousands of other pastors will take that position and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Christians.”

Scarborough is urging pastors across the nation to sign the pledge.

He referenced the “outrageous penalties” being assessed against people of faith simply because they don’t want to participate in a same-sex union.

An Oregon bakery is facing a \$135,000 fine for refusing to make a cake for a lesbian wedding and a Washington State florist faces fines for refusing to participate in a gay wedding.

“Christians are being declared the lawbreakers when we are simply living by what we have always believed, and by a set of laws that the culture historically has agreed to,” he said. “Right now the courts are changing the playing field and declaring that what the natural eye can see and natural law reveals is not truth.... What will we do, and how will we respond?”

Dobson said there’s no doubt that LGBT activists are targeting Christian business owners.

“For about fifty years the homosexual community has had as its goal to change the culture, to change the ideology, and if necessary, to force people who don’t agree by use of the courts,” Dobson told me. “I think there’s a collision here and we can all see it and where it’s going to go is anybody’s guess, but it is serious.”



To be clear, the men and women who courageously signed this pledge did so knowing the hell storm that is about to be unleashed on them and their families.

“We have no choice,” Staver told me. “We cannot compromise our clear biblical convictions, our religious convictions.”

Todd Starnes is host of Fox News & Commentary, heard on hundreds of radio stations. Sign up for his [American Dispatch newsletter](#), be sure to join his [Facebook](#) page, and follow him on [Twitter](#). His latest book is ["God Less America."](#)

The following section is a re-post of Special Bulletin #4

Dr. Dobson, Dr. Scarborough, and Mat Staver discuss the Supreme Court decision on marriage: “A Bonhoeffer Moment in America”

*“The timing of this **conference call** in coordination with the anniversary of the stand on the bridge in Selma is remarkable.”*

Opening remarks by **Rick Scarborough** (President—Vision America Action):

“There is a growing concern about the nature of the ruling the Supreme Court will hand down in June on same-sex marriage. We believe that the majority of the Court will rule in favor of elevating what we have always taught to be a sinful lifestyle to the stature of a civil right—forcing us to choose between their ruling and our religious convictions that are based on Scripture. This ruling will conflict with our deeply held conviction and religious belief.

“With the current Administration, there is every reason to believe that the Executive Branch will use the full weight of the Federal justice system to enforce this. We must be prepared for that possibility.

“I am speaking as a minister to the moral and biblical ramifications of this expected ruling. This would be a decision as incorrect and as tragic as Dred Scott. Because of the trends and cultural shifts that we have witnessed in culture over the past forty years, we have all known that this day would likely come and Christians would be put at odds with the culture and the courts.

“I believe we are there. We are approaching a Bonhoeffer moment in America.

“Outrageous penalties are now being assessed against people of faith and conviction who haven’t changed their position on marriage. Rather it’s the courts that have changed the definitions, the rules and laws that now govern us. They are ruling against Nature’s Law and Nature’s God. Christians are being declared the lawbreakers when we are simply living by what we have always believed, and by a set of laws that the culture historically has agreed to.

“My desire as a pastor is to see another Great Awakening, and I pray that those caught up in any sin will find Jesus and God’s grace, but that can only come when there is a biblical standard lifted up and acknowledged as truth. Right now the courts are changing the playing field and declaring



that what the natural eye can see and natural law reveals is not truth. Therefore, this is a Bonhoeffer moment. What will we do, and how will we respond?

“The timing of this **conference call** in coordination with the anniversary of the stand on the bridge in Selma is remarkable. Things do not change if no one stands up and takes the brunt. Right after a word from Dr. Dobson, Mat Staver will walk us through the seriousness of the situation. We must find the mind of God and walk uprightly regardless of the direction of the culture or the Court.”

Dr. James Dobson (Founder—Family Talk Radio):

“Thank you, Rick. That was a beautiful statement you made, and it stirs my heart. As Christian leaders, we cannot sit and let our voices go silent when that’s what the rest of the world, Congress and many other Christian leaders and pastors are doing. We must stand together. Everyone I have talked to here at Family Talk agrees.

“We will be attacked from every direction, and critics will do all they can to weaken and embarrass us, but so what? Are we going to sit on our reputations and go to our graves without having played a role? This is Roe v. Wade all over again. I am standing shoulder to shoulder with all who will stand up for God’s Word concerning marriage. We don’t know all of the steps that must be taken, but God will reveal His will. To the extent that I am able to influence anybody, I will do it with passion.”

Mat Staver (Founder—Liberty Counsel)

“I express my thanks to Rick Scarborough and Dr. Dobson. Their comments resonate with all of us. Let me address the seriousness and the basis for engaging with resistance to a Supreme Court decision that could go the wrong way. Once you elevate same-sex marriage to the level of protected status, whether on the federal or the state level, you begin to change and transform the face of society. In my view, it will result in the beginning of the end of Western civilization.

“When you make a government policy that says that this is a relationship between humans that is so critical, so fundamental, and so essential to our society and to our future that we are going to protect it by law and surround it with laws and benefits that are designed to protect that relationship as a policy matter, you are taking a big step. You are essentially saying that boys and girls don’t need moms and dads—that moms and dads are irrelevant. Gender becomes pointless when government adopts same-sex marriage. It creates a genderless relationship out of a very gender-specific relationship. It says that it doesn’t matter and that two moms or two dads are absolutely equivalent to a mom and a dad.

“Immediately, when elevated to that level of a constitutionally protected category, it is given the same status as race. What you cannot legally do with respect to race, you will not be able to do legally with respect to same-sex unions and sexual immorality.

“Think of race in the context of religious expression or conscience expression and replace it with sexual immorality, transsexualism or so-called gender identity. For example, churches and other religious organizations are exempt from the religious discrimination provisions of federal, state or local nondiscrimination laws. But they are not exempted from the race provisions. So Catholics can hire Catholics, and Baptists can hire Baptists, but they cannot hire only “white” Catholics or only “white” Baptists. They would face significant penalties. You can’t have separate restrooms or drinking fountains for people of a different color. If a church did that, they would be liable for a significant amount of damages because of discrimination on the basis of race.



“Same-sex marriage or laws including sexual orientation or gender identity as a non-discrimination category directly impact religious organizations and churches. If a man wants to use the women’s restroom and a church official told him he could not, then that act would be like telling people of color they cannot use the “white only” restroom. You will also have the same issues with tax exemption over sexual preference as you have now over race.

“Already a Methodist church association in New Jersey lost its property tax exemption status because it refused to allow use of their facilities for a same-sex union. Although the church then obtained a religious exemption instead, it ceased all weddings on its boardwalk pavilion. Bob Jones University lost its tax exemption status because it refused to allow mixed-race dating. They have since abandoned that false doctrinal belief, but they still lost their tax exemption at the Supreme Court. It will not be long if same-sex marriage is adopted that other universities could lose tax exemptions if they maintain a policy based on natural marriage and biblical morality.

“Anything that you can imagine on the basis of race discrimination will apply to this issue of sexual preference. There is a huge collision coming. Those examples will be intensified significantly.

“Roe v. Wade was a time when the church should have said no, regardless of what seven Supreme Court justices said. The difference is Roe was a wrong decision that resulted in a loss of life, but people were not forced to participate. With this issue, people will be forced to participate and affirm it. It will affect licenses for counselors, attorney disciplines, and every licensing profession will be affected.

“In the history of the Supreme Court, they have reversed themselves about 230 times, and other Supreme Court decisions have been overruled by new laws or Constitutional amendments. Two were especially bad decisions. There was the Dred Scott decision in 1857. The Supreme Court told Scott he was not entitled to full citizenship, because people believed that “blacks are inferior human beings.” That was contrary to the Constitution, natural law and revealed law, but we still went along with it, and we ended up in a civil war.

Today no one would agree that was right. Why did we obey it then? In the case of Buck v. Bell a lady in Virginia was forcibly sterilized as part of the eugenics movement. This was promoted by Planned Parenthood because they wanted to get rid of the “undesirables,” which according to Planned Parenthood at the time included blacks, the infirmed and those with low IQs. “They did this because there was a history of low IQ in her family. The Supreme Court said that there is no justice for her because “three generations of imbeciles” in her family was enough, so they upheld the decision.

When the Nazis were put on trial at the Nuremburg trials, they cited the Buck v. Bell decision to justify their use of forced sterilization. To this day, that Supreme Court decision hasn’t been overturned, though no one would justify that decision today. It wasn’t right then, and it isn’t right now.

“In 1992, Planned Parenthood v. Casey was argued in the Supreme Court. During that week they voted, and it was a 5-4 vote to overrule Roe v. Wade. For thirty days William Rehnquist was writing the opinion to overrule it. For those thirty days, O’Connor and Justice David Souter lobbied Justice Anthony Kennedy who was part of the majority to overrule it.

“After thirty days, they broke through, and he wrote a note to a fellow justice Harry Blackmun who wrote the decision in 1973. Kennedy switched his vote, so the Opinion was taken away from Rehnquist and given to another justice. So Roe v. Wade was upheld, rather than overruled.



O'Connor said in that Opinion that even if Roe v. Wade was decided wrongly, we have to uphold it because the power of the Court rests solely in the confidence of the people.

“Unlike the executive branch, which enforces the law, or the legislative branch, which enacts the law, she said that the Supreme Court has no power to enforce our law: the only way our orders have enforcement is because the people voluntarily comply. The executive branch must uphold it. Upholding Roe v. Wade was necessary, she argued, to uphold the power of the Court and the confidence of the people that what they do is right. She said in her Opinion that upholding the decision of Roe v. Wade was a necessity to maintain the authority of the Court and the power of the institution.

“Historically we know that Thomas Jefferson would not enforce the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 that President John Adams had signed. Jefferson wrote a letter to Abigail Adams saying, what gives you the idea that the judges have the final authority to be the arbiters of the law? If that were the case, we would have a despotic branch.

“Lincoln advocated disobedience to Dred Scott, and Andrew Jackson advocated disobedience to the banking bill, so it's not unprecedented that both executives and individuals have said some laws are just and some are unjust.

“Martin Luther King's argument in “Letter from Birmingham Jail” considered just and unjust laws. Just laws are laws in conformity to higher law we have a duty to obey. We also have a duty to disobey laws that are against higher law but be prepared for the consequences of the wrath of the civil authorities. We still cannot obey the unjust laws.

“In 2004, same-sex marriage came to Massachusetts. Catholic charities refused to place orphans in same-sex homes, so they stopped doing adoptions. What they should have done, and now what we should do, is to say we are called on a mission and that is to place orphans in homes with moms and dads. We will not run from that calling, but we will also not violate our consciences and The Bible by placing them in a place that is sinful and immoral. If you disagree with it, bring your civil authority after us because we will not voluntarily cease with our calling.



“The photographer out in New Mexico, the baker in Oregon, Washington florist Barronelle Stutzman—they are all facing the same thing. We either all stand together, or we hang separately. This is indeed a Bonhoeffer moment. They might be able to pick us off individually, but collectively they can't. Whenever someone gets targeted, we must gather around them and say no.

“In Alabama, the Supreme Court has made a decision to refuse to enforce same-sex marriage (read the decision at LC.org). When you read the decision, you don't get the impression that the Alabama Supreme Court justices are waiting for the June decision to see what the U.S. Supreme Court decides. They are making their stand now that they will not go along with it, and their minds won't be changed.

“It's one thing to say you will stand; it's another to withstand the fines and the potential of loss of your entire livelihood (such as Barronelle Stutzman). We must collectively support and stand with them and say we will not cross that line. We need to let them know now where we stand. Tell them now that if they cross that line, they will become an illegitimate institution, that the Supreme Court will lose the respect of the American people and therefore lose its authority.”

<http://defendmarriage.org/about-2>
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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.

<http://defendmarriage.org/pledge-in-solidarity-to-defend-marriage>

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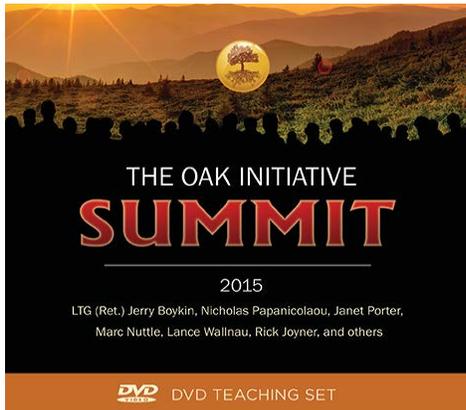
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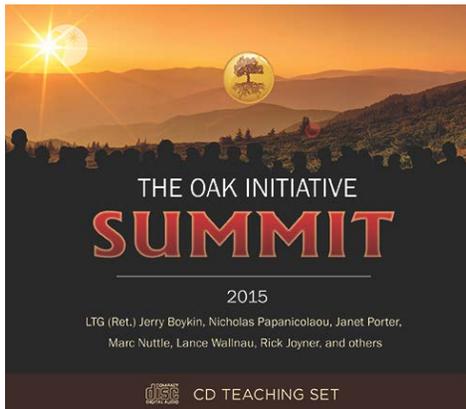


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3	Feb 26 PM	'Establishing Your Position of Influence'	LTG (Ret.) Jerry Boykin, Lance Wallnau
4	Feb 27 AM	'America's Heritage and Constitution'	Nicholas Papanicolaou
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