



Dear EFCA Family,

Today the United States Supreme Court by a 5 to 4 ruling in *Obergefell vs Hodges* made same sex marriage legal in all 50 states. Although for many of us this ruling was not a surprise it was none the less a significant disappointment as it stands against the clear Biblical definition of marriage and the cultural practices of societies down through the centuries.

The Word of God is clear in both Genesis 1:26-27 and Matthew 19:4-6 that marriage was established by God and is a covenant relationship between a man and a woman. The EFCA Spiritual Heritage Committee in a document entitled "A Church Statement on Human Sexuality," gives the following suggested definition of marriage:

*Marriage is the original and foundational institution of human society, established by God as a one-flesh, covenantal union between a man and a woman that is life-long (until separated by death), exclusive (monogamous and faithful), and generative in nature (designed for bearing and rearing children), and it is to reflect the relationship between Christ and the Church.*

(The entire document from the Spiritual Heritage Committee is available at this [link](#) and is a significant resource for churches in thinking through these issues from a clearly Biblical perspective. In addition, the National Association of Evangelicals released a statement available at this [link](#) and Greg Strand has posted on his blog at this [link](#).)

The reality of the situation for us as the people of God is that today's Supreme Court decision did not take God by surprise nor does it in any way change the Biblical definition of marriage. Rather it is a call for us to clearly embrace our Lord's definition of marriage and to respond to this recent development with grace and truth like He would (John 1:14). It will be important that our responses reflect the character and heart of Jesus to the world around us.

We have moved into a time when our perspective on marriage is no longer supported by the law of our nation and is quickly being abandoned by a growing number of Americans. However, this is not a time to wring our hands in despair or to respond in anger. Responses of fear or anger will not honor the Lord nor will they demonstrate the redemptive power of the gospel. Rather this is an opportunity for us to be the church and to live out what we say we believe.

Now is the time for us to commit to pray for the leaders of our nation as Paul wrote in Romans 13:1-7, to be gracious to those who don't share our views and love them as people created in the image of God, and to engage the world around us on this issue in ways that speak truth and point people to the redeeming gospel of Jesus.

As these events unfold in our nation we must ever more clearly stand on the truth of God's Word regarding marriage, demonstrate to the world around us the beauty of loving Christian marriages, and commit ourselves to teach and model Biblical marriage to our children and grandchildren who are growing up in a rapidly changing culture.

None of us knows exactly what challenges the future holds for the church and for us as followers of Jesus. What we do know is that the Lord of the church is in charge and He has a plan that He will work to completion to His ultimate glory. It will be important for all of us to be prayerful and wise as we lead the church and our families in the days to come.

Know that Becky and I are praying for you these days as you interact with those in your lives who may not agree with the Biblical perspective on marriage and as you lead your churches to respond to this development with truth and love. May the Lord Jesus be glorified in our lives as we walk this road together.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin".

Kevin Kompelien  
President, EFCA