

# Are U.S. citizens HEADED FOR HEAVEN?

by Two Patriots

**Robert P. George:** How shall we respond to a lawless decision in which the Supreme Court by the barest of majorities usurps authority vested by the Constitution in the people and their elected representatives?

We should let Abraham Lincoln be our guide. Faced with the Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision, Lincoln declared the ruling to be illegitimate and vowed that he would treat it as such. He squarely faced Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney's claim to judicial supremacy and firmly rejected it. To accept it, he said, would be for the American people "to resign their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal."

Today we are faced with the same challenge. Like the Great Emancipator, we must reject and resist an egregious act of judicial usurpation. We must, above all, tell the truth: Obergefell v. Hodges is an illegitimate decision. What Stanford Law School Dean John Ely said of Roe v. Wade applies with equal force to Obergefell: "It is not constitutional law and gives almost no sense of an obligation to try to be." What Justice Byron White said of Roe is also true of Obergefell: It is an act of "raw judicial power."

The lawlessness of these decisions is evident in the fact that they lack any foundation or warrant in the text, logic, structure, or original understanding of the Constitution. The justices responsible for these rulings, whatever their good intentions, are substituting their own views of morality and sound public policy for those of the people and their elected representatives.

They have set themselves up as superlegislators possessing a kind of plenary power to impose their judgments

2 on the nation. What could be more unconstitutional—more anti-constitutional—than that?

The rule of law is not the rule of lawyers—even lawyers who are judges. Supreme Court justices are not infallible, nor are they immune from the all-too-human temptation to unlawfully seize power that has not been granted to them. Decisions such as *Dred Scott*, *Roe v. Wade*, and *Obergefell* amply demonstrate that.

In thinking about how to respond to *Obergefell*, we must bear in mind that it is not only the institution of marriage that is at stake here—it is also the principle of self-government. And so we must make clear to those candidates for high offices who are seeking our votes, that our willingness to support them depends on their willingness to stand, as Abraham Lincoln stood, for the Constitution, and therefore against judicial decisions—about marriage or anything else—that threaten to place us, to quote Jefferson, “under the despotism of an oligarchy.”

*Robert P. George is McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University.*

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**Timothy George:** In the summer of 2009, the late Charles W. Colson, Professor Robert P. George, and I drafted the Manhattan Declaration which called on Christian believers of all denominations to stand fast in support of what we deemed to be the three most pressing moral issues of our time, namely: the sacredness of every human life from conception to natural death, the dignity of marriage as God intended it be, a lifelong conjugal and covenantal union between one man and one woman, and religious freedom for all persons. Now, in the summer of 2015, the Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* undermines marriage and threatens religious freedom.

The erosion of the marriage culture has happened quickly. For example, in 2009, newly elected President Barack Obama and then-Secretary of State Hilary Clinton both affirmed the understanding of marriage set forth in the Manhattan Declaration. The Supreme Court’s dictum

today does not bode well for the future of our democracy. The ability to decide such a fundamental matter related to the flourishing of family life and the integrity of the common good has been taken away from the people and their elected representatives in each of the fifty states.

Christians who may be discouraged by this turn of events should take heart by considering three other Supreme Court decisions of the past. *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857) denied the rights of citizenship to African Americans. *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) authorized race discrimination under the pretext of “separate but equal.” *Roe v. Wade* (1973) asserted a right to take the life of children still waiting to be born. The first two decisions were subsequently overturned by constitutional amendment and subsequent court action.

There is no guarantee the same thing will happen with today's decision. But Christians should work toward the reaffirmation of marriage as it has been maintained across all civilizations and in our own country until the very recent past.

Marriage, like religious freedom and life itself, is fundamentally a gift from God, not a contrivance of our government or any government. As we wrote in the closing words of the Manhattan Declaration: “We will fully and ungrudgingly render to Caesar what is Caesar’s. But under no circumstances will we render to Caesar what is God’s.”

*Timothy George is the founding dean of  
Beeson Divinity School of Samford University.*

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Ray recommends the reading of a “devotional” book about Revelation by Matt Proctor. Printed by College Press of Joplin, MO, the book **Victorious** encourages the reading of John’s Revelation and points out many helpful things about the Revelation.

Other brief Bible studies like this one are also available from Mission Outreach: [NB-B01](#) “How to ENTER Christ’s Way,” [NB-B02](#) “Preface to ‘Were You BURIED with Christ?’,” [NB-B03](#) “Introducing ‘Do Peter’s KEYS still open the Way?’,” [CD-Co4](#) – “What Does Jesus Say About Himself?” [CD-Go1](#) – “What About False Teachers?” [CD-Co5](#) – “What About True Apostles?”

4 All currently available Viewpoint tracts & booklets are linked at <http://missionoutreach.org/CU-G01.pdf>. Topics are: CD-Doctrines of Jesus & His apostles, CE-Evangelism by Christians, CU-Unity IN CHRIST, CW-Worship of the Christ (It's by serving Him), DL-Daily Living by Christians, FA-Salvation Is Not by Faith Alone, HS-Holy Spirit Working in Christians, NB-New Birth INTO Christ's church, and PB-Proper Bible Understanding.

Your attention is invited to booklets on becoming a Christian. One title is "Three Times Peter used the KEYS of the Kingdom" (Viewpoint study [NB-K01](#)). You may also be interested in "We are invited to enter into COVENANT with God," by Boyce Mouton (Viewpoint study [CD-F03](#)). As does this study, it speaks of freedom in Christ based on love of truth and love of the unity Jesus planned for us.

[CW-L02](#) is a study by Erwin Bishop and others, "When You Come Together." It addresses the fact that our worship should be lifelong and constant rather than only when we are "in church" with other Christians. [CD-D21](#) is "Concerning FELLOWSHIP in the Supper of Remembrance." And [PB-W01](#) is "Were You RAISED With Christ?" At amazon.com on the internet you could purchase the book, RAISED INTO NEW LIFE, by Ray Downen (Viewpoint study [PB-Z01](#)). Or "Should Any CHRISTIAN Ever Be Baptized?" ([NB-O01](#)).

If we do not die to sin, we cannot live with Jesus Christ! Those who want to find freedom and life in Jesus of Nazareth do well to read and believe the Bible. Your help in reaching other readers with Viewpoint tracts and booklets would be appreciated. Tracts can sometimes help win a lost person to Jesus. And many Viewpoint booklets are aimed at helping Christians grow in Christ.

Jesus built a "family of faith" (the word we use is "church") where those who believe in Him gather to help one another in the Way which leads to life. Please join us in a Christian church. Ray is a member of Blendville Christian Church which meets at 2201 S Picher Ave in Joplin, MO. Ray says it's one of the many fine churches in the Joplin area. He also recommends Villa Heights Christian, Mt. Hope Church of Christ, 26th & Connecticut Church of Christ, and others too numerous to mention.



PHOTO BY  
LYLE ENSMINGER

A Viewpoint  
Brief Bible Study  
from Ray Downen

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1148 W 28th St, Apt. 301 \* Joplin MO 64804-1613  
mopmailing@gmail.com \* missionoutreach.org

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