

Obama and DOMA

Sun, Feb. 27, 2011 Posted: 09:53 AM EDT

The ground shook this week when Attorney General Holder announced the decision of the Administration not to defend the Defense of Marriage Act in court. This was the law of the land, passed by both houses of Congress and signed by President Clinton. But The New York Times hailed this decision in a front-page story and in a lead editorial.

Justifying this extraordinary action, Holder says that in the congressional debate in the 90s there were "numerous expressions reflecting moral disapproval of gays and lesbians and their intimate family relationships." He went on to describe this as "animus" (defined by Webster as "vehement enmity, hatred, ill will") and that that violates the Equal Protection Clause.

But wait a minute. Animus to defend a moral position based on 2,000 years of classical and Christian teaching rooted in scripture--or for Muslims to declare their opposition?

Holder has embraced the position of Federal Judge Vaughn Walker in California that opposing so-called gay marriage can be "harmful to gays and lesbians." But that's like claiming that opposition to polygamy is harmful to polygamists or that laws defining marriage as the union of two people harm those who prefer to live in what are called sexual "triads" or "quadrads." Our historic marriage laws harm nobody; they serve husbands, wives, children, and the common good of society.

Not to be able to speak to these issues in great debates isn't tolerance. It's thought control and censorship. And if the expression of our deepest convictions is treated as animus, our religious liberty is in great peril. We cannot fail to speak the truth even if it is labeled hate speech. This is exactly why we wrote the Manhattan Declaration, pledging that we would under no circumstances render to Caesar what belongs to God.

Though the circumstances obviously are not comparable, the issue is the same one Dietrich Bonhoeffer faced when he realized that as a faithful Christian he could not obey Caesar. Bonhoeffer's example is well-known. But an equally compelling illustration is Martin Niemöller.

Dr. Timothy George has given a brilliant, brief meditation on Niemöller, who had the courage to defy Hitler to his face. We strongly urge you to view this inspiring video, which is also increasingly timely. You can get the link to it at our website, breakpoint.org. You can also get at breakpoint.org a link to the Alliance Defense Fund, which is doing some heroic work in this area and has produced a brilliant and insightful paper.

Holder's decision is but the latest in a series of steps intended to intimidate us, to shut off debate, and to keep us out on moral issues: first the California case, then the huge corporation Apple taking down the Manhattan Declaration app from its iTunes store, and now this decision by Holder.

The ACLU has hailed Holder's decision as "the tipping point in the gay rights movement." Sadly, that may well be the case unless we speak out loudly and quickly. Do not be

intimidated.

Our message must be firmly and lovingly presented. All humans, gay and straight, are made in the image of God and thus deserving of full dignity and respect. We denounce gay-bashing. But we also denounce the suppression of free, civil discourse in critical moral debates--all the more reason to sign the Manhattan Declaration and get your friends to do so as well.

From [BreakPoint](#), February 25, 2011, Copyright 2011, Prison Fellowship Ministries. Reprinted with the permission of Prison Fellowship Ministries. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced or distributed without the express written permission of Prison Fellowship Ministries. "[BreakPoint®](#)" and "Prison Fellowship Ministries®" are registered trademarks of Prison Fellowship

Chuck Colson
Christian Post Guest Columnist

Copyright © Christianpost.com. All rights reserved.