

Tidewater Pastors Council Post Press Report

Tidewater Pastors Council is a multiracial, multi-denominational council of pastors united on issues of cultural importance. They espouse views that are biblically centered, issues oriented and culturally relevant, and today they are joining hands with likeminded pastors from many denominations and organizations

Many conflicting and confusing ideas about marriage are promulgated today. Yet, marriage as the relationship of one man and one woman has remained steadfast throughout millennia. It is the foundation of civilized society, the most wholesome environment in which to raise children, the bedrock of stable communities, and an institution that encompasses all races, religions, and cultures. It is not a civil rights issue, nor is it an institution whose meaning is determined solely by legislative bodies. It is an institution that supercedes legislative bodies—an institution legislators and legislative bodies are obligated to protect.

Virginians are about to face a decision of immense moral consequence, and two sides with vastly different and incompatible beliefs are vying for the affection of our communities. To the winner will go the hearts and minds of our children. And that is precisely what each side is counting on. Regrettably, the most important moral voice in the discussion – the voice of pastors – has been nearly silenced at a time when our community is crying out for moral clarity. That is about to end.

To alleviate that problem, the pastors meeting today have agreed to speak to the issue of marriage with moral clarity. The pastors understand that the legislative body is also looking for moral clarity, and that a message will be communicated to that legislative body by their voice or by our silence. Therefore, they have agreed to speak, and to speak clearly. And although they will not endorse a specific amendment--solely because the legislative process is not completed--they will endorse the principles the marriage amendments represent.

Pastors understand that marriage is a sacred, legal, and social union ordained by God to be a life-long, sexually exclusive relationship between one man and one woman. Concerned bishops and pastors hold this institution in highest esteem, and strongly oppose any legal sanction of marriage counterfeits, such as the legalization of same-sex "marriage" or the granting of marriage-like benefits to same-sex couples, cohabiting couples, or any other non-marital relationship. History, nature, social science, anthropology, religion, and theology all coalesce in vigorous support of marriage as it has always been understood: the most fundamental building block of society, a joyous lifelong union of one man and one woman for the purpose of partnership, protection, and creation of stable families. They strongly urge the passage of an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia specifically protecting the definition of marriage under state law as a union between one man and one woman exclusively.