

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**
FREEDOM OF RELIGION
and
EQUAL PROTECTION –
INHERENT CONFLICTS
DO EXIST!



By Stephen L. Bakke  July 30, 2015



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If you're a religiously affiliated organization, then you have wider latitude in terms of the Constitution and the protections that the First Amendment provides. I think Americans make a distinction between protecting the first Amendment rights of religious organizations or religiously affiliated organizations and being able to discriminate, broadly – simply because of one individual who owns a business and their own values and their being able to impose those values on either their employers or their customers. – DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz declaring, in effect, that the right to exercise one's religious values ends at the church door.

Here's what provoked me:

Sometime I think we have too much false clarity in our opinions about important issues. The fact is that there are inherent conflicts in our laws and even our inalienable rights. Consider laws that provide security. Then reflect on our inherent right to "liberty". There is no way absolute liberty can be achieved while providing absolute security, either financial or physical. We've got to get used to that and opposing parties to these rights or issues have to learn to live with the conflict and find ways around them – that's what we call tolerance.

Here's my response:

Freedom of Religion and Equal Protection – Inherent conflicts do exist!

Contrary to some "experts'" opinion, laws and inalienable rights aren't discreet – clear lines don't separate them. Inherent conflicts exist which we deal with all the time. Consider same-sex marriage, rescued recently by the Supreme Court.

We are actually debating whether or not you can be forced to violate your faith in a country originally settled by people looking for the freedom to practice their faith. – **Drew McKissick**

Opponents of same-sex marriage see their rights to religious freedom torn asunder, while supporters rejoice in the new definition of marriage. Both incorrectly claim clarity for their position, but should accept the inevitable conflict and dredge up some tolerance.

Tolerance is a word without meaning if it doesn't work both ways – **Archbishop (Philadelphia) Charles Chaput**

Same sex marriage is here to stay! Many traditional churches won't be changing their official teachings soon, if ever. And some individuals will never be able to change. The reality is, there's no way opponents of same-sex marriage can summarily deny the reality of the new marriage definition without "imposing" their beliefs on others, even in a small way. And there's no way proponents can expect opponents to leave their beliefs at the church door without imposing their own beliefs on those opponents.

Liberty requires bravery ... I am too afraid that too many of my fellow Americans are too hostile to the principle of liberty. Most people want liberty for themselves. I differ. I want liberty for me and liberty for my fellow man. – **Professor Walter Williams**

Let's agree to disagree, and move on to a solution. To do this, let's live with some compromises. Opponents of same-sex marriage should accept this as a legal secular relationship – different, for them, from an official religious marriage. Supporters should accept the fact that the practice of one's religion won't stop at the church door. Recalling the "baker" case, service-providers should be permitted to refuse significant participation in the same-sex marriage celebration, but shouldn't be allowed to refuse routine service.

This might create equilibrium on this issue, but some other issues will be more difficult – abortion, for example!

The left, so fond of falsely accusing others of forcing views on them, now demonstrably coerces its will on the tiny handful of wedding service providers who would rather not participate in ceremonies antithetical to their sincerely held beliefs. – **Mark Davis**

Hey SB, personally, I'm most comfortable with the interpretation that the role of government is to protect religious liberties FROM the state, and not vice-versa. – **Stefano Bachovich** – obscure curmudgeon and wise political pundit – a prolific purveyor of opinions on just about everything – SB's primary "go to guy."