

THE CHRISTIAN POST

Liberals 'Hounding Heretics Ruthlessly,' Too Intolerant for Civil Debate, Conservative Gay Marriage Supporter Says

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A conservative pundit who supports same-sex marriage stated that liberals could never have a civil discussion on the debate over marriage definition.

At a panel on gay marriage and religious liberty held on the main stage of the annual Conservative Political Action Conference, Guy Benson of Townhall.com said that "this conversation we are having right now, literally couldn't happen at a leftwing conference."

"Because we would all be hounded off the stage and booed because half of us are holding the position that Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton held about four seconds ago," said Benson.

"I think that this speaks well of our movement and poorly of their movement that they have done a heel turn on the issue and they are hounding heretics ruthlessly."

Benson also noted that he believed the "hounding" had gotten to the point that "if you're a Democrat, if you're a liberal, and you might hold traditional views on marriage, you probably don't want to talk about it very much for fear of the wrath and judgement of your fellow so-called 'open-minded' leftists."

Benson's comments were part of a CPAC panel titled "Dearly Beloved: A Conversation on Religious Liberty and Marriage in America."

The panel focused on issues pertaining to how religious liberty is affected by gay marriage legalization, especially after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 to legalize gay marriage nationwide in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

In addition to Benson, other panelists were Ryan T. Anderson of The Heritage Foundation, Mollie Hemingway of the Federalist, and Ilya Shapiro of the CATO Institute.

Both Benson and Shapiro supported gay marriage legalization nationwide, while Anderson and Hemingway were opposed.

While agreeing with the *Obergefell* majority opinion authored by Justice Anthony Kennedy, Benson and Shapiro both felt the reasoning in the decision was questionable.

Shapiro, who supported the striking down of the state laws banning gay marriage, did not believe that the Kennedy-authored majority opinion was a valid legal opinion.

"It's poetic, it's interesting. There's sociology, some history, some whatever else," stated Shapiro. "But if you're a lawyer looking for the rule of decision in the case, as far as I can tell you take a scoop of equal protection, and a cup of due process, wrap it in some sort of equal dignity and viola!"

"That's not law. And I think Kennedy did a disservice to all of us, whichever side of the issue you are on, by writing it that way."

Hosted by the American Conservative Union and held at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, CPAC brings together conservative activists and intellectuals for panels, speeches, and presentations.

Notable speakers at the multiday conference include U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, conservative radio personality Glenn Beck, former Senator Rick Santorum, Dr. Ben Carson, and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan.