

AN  
APOSTOLIC  
RESPONSE

TO THE SUPREME COURT DECISION

LOUISIANA  
— VS. —  
CALLAIS



DR. MARK A. ELLIS



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*Power tends to follow capital, institutions, data,  
and coalition.*

*If those four aren't in place, even friendly  
representation has limited effect.*

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# Introduction

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There is an assumption that a single congressional seat or a single elected official of a certain background can fully carry the voice, values, and varied interests of all African Americans. That's never been structurally true, and it can become a distraction if it convinces people that political symbolism equals real leverage.

Was the supreme court decision the right one, I don't believe so in Louisiana. **However:**

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*If the goal is influence, stability, and upward mobility, the strategy has to widen beyond electoral politics into ownership, organization, and measurable outcomes.*

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# 1. Reset the Premise

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## Representation vs. Power

Representation matters — but it is not power by itself.

### Power tends to follow:

- Capital — who owns and funds
- Institutions — who organizes people consistently
- Data — who can prove outcomes and needs
- Coalition — who can align across groups

If those four aren't in place, even “friendly” representation has limited effect.

## 2. What Christian African Americans Tend to Value

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While no group is monolithic, multiple surveys (Pew Research, Gallup, Barna) consistently show these priorities among Black Christians:

- Faith & Church Community — high weekly engagement compared to national averages
- Family Stability — strong emphasis on marriage, parenting, and intergenerational support
- Economic Opportunity — jobs, small business support, fair wages
- Education — especially concern for local school quality and youth outcomes
- Justice & Fairness — policing and legal equity, paired with desire for safety and order
- Health Disparities — high concern due to disproportionate chronic illness rates
- Upward Mobility — not just survival, but legacy-building

### **A notable nuance**

Many Black Christians hold socially conservative personal values (family, faith, morality) while also supporting structural fairness and opportunity in public policy.

That tension is often poorly represented in politics, which tends to flatten people into one-dimensional voting blocs.

### 3. Make Our Interest Measurable

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If a community wants to be heard, it has to move from “we feel” to “we can prove.”

#### **Organize around clear scorecards:**

- Median household income (zip code level)
- Homeownership rates
- School proficiency (reading and math)
- Business ownership and revenue
- Life expectancy and chronic illness rates

When we can say:

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*“In our district, literacy is at xx%, median income is \$X, and we’ve raised it by 12% in 3 years...”*

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... we shift from protest to negotiation leverage.

## 4. Pooling Money

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### From Consumption to Collective Capital

This is one of the most under-leveraged strategies.

#### Practical models:

- Investment clubs (rotating capital into real estate, franchises, or local businesses)
- Church-based economic cooperatives
- Credit union strengthening and community banking
- Targeted “Buy Black + Build Black” ecosystems (not just spending, but ownership)

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*Don't just circulate dollars — compound them.*

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Even modest, consistent pooling done with structure and accountability creates lending power, ownership stakes, and political influence (because capital speaks).

## 5. Strengthening the Core Units

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### Family

Two-parent household stability (where possible) correlates strongly with higher income, better education outcomes, and lower incarceration rates.

This isn't about shaming reality...it's about supporting structure where it can grow:

- Mentorship for men
- Marriage and parenting training through churches
- Economic readiness before family formation

### Education

Instead of only advocating externally:

- Tutoring pipelines through churches
- Literacy mandates (every child reading by 3rd grade)
- Trade and entrepreneurship exposure early

If literacy rises, everything else follows. Better education and literacy can drive higher voter turnout.

### Health

Often overlooked but critical. High rates of hypertension, diabetes, and obesity quietly drain wealth, productivity, and life expectancy.

Churches can lead here:

- Fitness ministries
- Nutritional education
- Preventative care partnerships

## 6. Business & Income Growth

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### Focus on:

- Skilled trades — fastest path to middle-class income
- Franchising — proven models vs. risky startups
- Service-based businesses — low barrier, scalable

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*Teach profit literacy not just entrepreneurship  
inspiration.*

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Many businesses fail not from lack of passion, but lack of financial structure.

## 7. Political Strategy

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### Without Over-Reliance

Instead of only reacting to redistricting:

- Build issue-based coalitions
- Show up with data and unified demands
- Fund candidates (any background) who align with measurable outcomes

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*Shift from “Who represents us?” to “Who produces results for what we’ve clearly defined?”*

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## **8. The Discipline of Focus**

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### **What We Build, What We Release**

This isn't about choosing between control or trust, it's about clarity of assignment.

### **What We Are Responsible For (Build & Act)**

These are the areas where God has already given us agency:

- How we manage our money
- How we build and sustain our families
- How we educate and develop our children
- How we care for our bodies and health
- How we organize, collaborate, and build institutions
- How we create income, businesses, and opportunities

In these areas, the call is not prayer alone...it's discipline, structure, and execution.

### **What We Influence but Don't Control (Engage Strategically)**

These require effort, but not obsession:

- Elections and political maps
- Public policy outcomes
- Broader cultural attitudes
- Decisions made by people in power

Here, we organize, advocate, participate, and build coalitions but we don't anchor our identity or hope in the outcome.

### **What We Must Release (Without Disengaging)**

Some outcomes will always sit beyond our final authority:

- How quickly systems change

- How others choose to think or respond
- Timing of opportunities and breakthroughs

Releasing doesn't mean ignoring, it means we refuse to be distracted, discouraged, or derailed by what we cannot ultimately force.

## **The Operating Principle**

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*We build with discipline where we have responsibility, we engage with strategy where we have influence, and we release with faith where we lack control.*

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## 9. We Don't Just Need a Seat

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### ***We need a system.***

A system that produces wealth.

A system that raises children well.

A system that keeps people healthy.

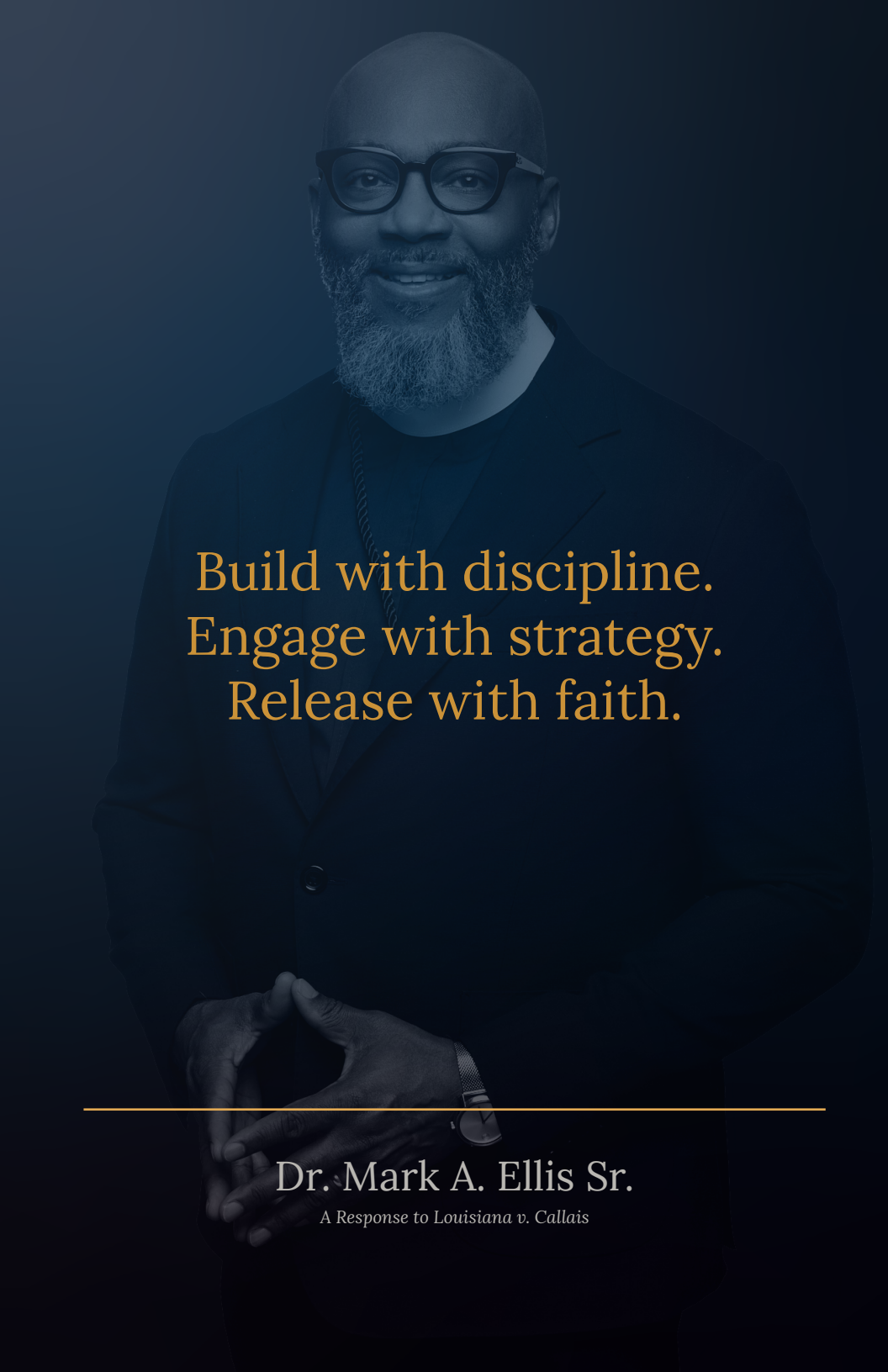
A system that trains minds and hands.

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*A seat can be taken. But a system can't be easily denied.*

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A portrait of Dr. Mark A. Ellis Sr., a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a dark shirt. He is smiling slightly and has his hands clasped in front of him. The background is a dark, solid color.

Build with discipline.  
Engage with strategy.  
Release with faith.

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Dr. Mark A. Ellis Sr.

*A Response to Louisiana v. Callais*