

Church Matters

“The Church and Its Call to Truth and Love”

Pastor Brad Bigney / July 26, 2015 / Grace Fellowship Church

I. How Should We as Christians Think in Light of the Supreme Court Ruling on Same-Sex Marriage?

I Corinthians 6:9-11 “**9** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, **10** nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

God hasn't stopped calling homosexuality a sin. You will not inherit the kingdom of God. Don't be deceived! God's Word hasn't changed.

When God talks about sexual sins He lumps them together along with a whole lot of other sins like covetousness and stealing. We're all in that list and the root of your sin is no different than theirs.

The worst sinner you should be aware of is you. Every day you should live with an awareness you're your sin is the worst because it's yours.

While the sin of homosexuality isn't that different than every other sin, a practicing homosexual, who claims to be a Christian but won't repent is a contradiction of terms. They're self-deceived and living a lie.

II. How Should We as Christians Live Now in Light this Ruling? (Romans 12-13)

A. God's Called Us to be Odd for God and to Swim Up-Stream in a Culture that's being Swept Away into Decadence and Darkness (Rom.12:1-2)

The days of Christianity being popular or tolerated are now over. We are living in a day where we should expect to be marginalized, mocked, and perhaps attacked for our beliefs.

Romans 12:2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

We're supposed to be the ones that live out God's Word and show people what God's will is no matter how unpopular it is. When you live this way, you will look radical and odd.

The church has always thrived most when it was in sharp contrast to the culture around it- not in conformity to it. We're not the first Christians to face living in times like these! But what we cannot do is cave in and conform ourselves to the world.

Lost people don't need a church that's just a regurgitation of a diluted version of what the culture is already telling them. They need God's truth!

Eighty times in Scripture Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth...’ In **John 8:32** He said, ‘You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free!’

B. God's Gifted Every Single One of You to Impact the People Around You (Rom. 12:3-8)

Your spiritual gifts should be impacting your family, neighbors, co-workers, and the people you rub shoulders with in daily life. God's given you spiritual gifts to impact people!

- Are you using them? Are you listening to the Spirit? Are you stepping out in faith? Are you taking risks?

Notice how many of the gifts have to do with speaking words: prophecy, teaching, and exhortation.

The most important thing you should be talking about isn't homosexuality. It's Jesus and the Gospel! Don't let all your conversations get hijacked and swallowed up in cultural war. Keep the main thing the main thing. Bring it back to Jesus.

- Have you been talking about Jesus as much as you've talked about gay marriage?
- Have you shared the Gospel as often as you've shared your \$.02 worth about homosexuality – whether it's in real time with someone or on Social Media?

C. God's Called Us to Not just Hunker Down and Survive but to Go on the Offensive with Truth and Love (Romans 12:9-21)

These verses give us our marching orders and set the tone for how we should fight this fight.

v. 21 "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

What does that look like?

v. 20 "Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

v. 14 "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

A fruit of the Spirit, love, is woven through this passage. Love, not anger, is supposed to characterize us as Christians, and it's supposed to start in the church with each other.

v. 10 "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love..."

v. 9 "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good."

Without love you can scream all the truth you want, but you'll just be a clanging gong or a crashing cymbal!

There are two kinds of churches that WON'T be able to reach lost, confused people in the days ahead:

- (1) Churches who compromise the truth of God's Word and all that He says about sexuality and everything else in this life – and become SILENT.
- (2) Churches who scream in outrage against everyone who disagrees – and become HATEFUL.

Both are unbiblical and will be ineffective. Instead, we want to keep speaking the truth in love, pointing people to Christ!

There will continue to be refugees of all kinds who are stumbling away broken from what the culture told them would satisfy but it didn't, and they'll be looking for better answers!

- Will we be the ones who have LOVED them even while they HATED us, so that when they're BROKEN by the so-called sexual freedoms they've been given by the culture they'll know they can turn back TO US in their greatest time of need?

Hold to the truth of what God says about marriage, sexuality, and everything else in life, but speak the truth with a Christian accent. That accent that's supposed to set us radically apart has always been love.

- Do you speak with a Christian accent? Do you speak the truth in love?

D. God's Called Us to Submit to the Ruling Authorities No Matter How Wicked They Are (Rom. 13:1-7)

E. God's Calling Us to Wake Up to the Times and Start Living All-Out for Jesus (Rom. 13:11-14)

To live for what matters most, he says you better get serious about your own sin before you start pointing it out in others!

v. 13 – 'Let us walk properly...'

Remember the sin you should be most up in arms with is your own because it's your sin against your Savior. Get serious about dealing with that!

v. 14 "But put on the Lord Jesus Christ..."

How do you do that?

- Start reading your Bible, praying, memorizing great passages or verses in the Bible.
- Rearrange your schedule to get into a small group – so that you can get up against believers at close range!

Because you want to become more like Christ!