

ISSUE

17.26

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

July 5,  
2015

## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM

10:20 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

### Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Jeff Nunn

Kyle Pope

### Deacons:

Steve Dixon

Ryan Ferguson

Arend Gressley

Ben Hight

Jack Langley

Blake McAlister

Brady McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Rusty Scott

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

### Evangelist:

Kyle Pope



## What's Really Changed?

By Kyle Pope

When envy moved the Persian political leaders to conspire against Daniel by persuading king Darius to forbid prayer to any god for thirty days (Dan. 6:1-9), Scripture preserves the amazing account of Daniel's response to this wicked law. It reads:

**Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days (Dan. 6:10, NKJV).**

Even though the law clearly promised death for this (Dan. 6:7) that didn't stop Daniel. He went on doing what he had always done. He recognized that it was more important to obey God than to follow the ungodly schemes of men.

On Friday morning, June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 the United States Supreme Court issued a ruling on six consolidated cases from Ohio, Michigan, Tennessee, and Kentucky. These cases focused on whether homosexuals have the legal right to marry, and whether states whose legislatures have passed laws banning homosexual marriage must recognize marriages from states that allow it. In a 5-4 decision the

court struck down laws banning homosexual marriage and ruled that all states must now recognize a marriage license issued by any other state. While there will undoubtedly be challenges to this, and some states have declared their intention to refuse implementation of this ruling, it may only be a matter of time until this legal redefinition of marriage in the eyes of our government becomes a reality of life in the United States of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As one preacher friend put when this announcement was made, “gentlemen, our lives have just changed!”

The Sunday following this announcement many preachers delivered sermons on what the Bible teaches about homosexuality. Others, wearied and numbed by the news sought to shift the focus away from such discouraging thoughts and considered other universal principles of God’s word that do not change with the shifting winds of public opinion. When the news was first announced I didn’t have any access to the paper, radio, television, or the internet and travel prevented me from hearing details on the ruling until days after the event. When Sunday came, I preached on the role of the church in God’s eternal plan.

I realize, as my friend put it, that now there are things that have *changed* for preachers and all Christians. One day soon it may be that preaching against homosexuality will be criminalized in this nation. Probably our children in public schools will face growing indoctrination aimed at viewing this behavior as “normal” or even *wholesome*. Our churches will likely face increasing pressures and persecution for not accepting those who refuse to turn away from and reject homosexual behavior. Any mistreatment of Christians that comes with this will be considered justified because we will be called “homophobes” and “hate-mongers.” We certainly should not be naïve to the likelihood of these coming threats.

With all that has changed, however, it seems to me that it is important to recognize that there are many things that have not changed at all:

**God’s definition of marriage has not changed.** When God created a companion for the very first man He also created the covenant relationship of marriage. This relationship was defined to comprise “**a MAN**” who leaves “**HIS**



**father and mother”** and becomes **“joined to HIS WIFE”** (Gen. 2:24, emphasis mine). We may note here that the word translated **“man”** is the Hebrew word *’ish* meaning *man, husband* or *male*, not the more generic term *’adam* which can mean *mankind* or *human being* in reference to both genders (cf. Gen. 1:27). In the same way, the word translated **“woman”** is *’ishah* meaning *woman, wife, or female*. The two parties involved in this covenant as God created it are **“a man”** and **“his wife,”** not “a man” and “his man” or “a woman” and “her woman.”

**Homosexuality is still sinful.** The Law of Moses commanded, **“You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination”** (Lev. 18:22). Here the word translated **“woman”** is from the same word used in Genesis 2:24, but the word **“male”** is the word *zakar* referring specifically to the *male* gender. According to this text, before God sexual conduct between a *male* and a *male* is **“an abomination”** meaning *to abhor, loathe, or detest* (TWOT). God hates this behavior and considered it punishable by death (Lev. 20:13). In the New Testament it is also condemned. **“Homosexuals”** and **“sodomites”** are included in a list of those who **“will not inherit the kingdom of God”** (1 Cor. 6:8-10). Such behavior is said to be **“contrary to sound doctrine”** (1 Tim. 1:10), **“vile,”** **“against nature”** (Rom. 1:26), and **“shameful”** (Rom. 1:27). Human courts can not change God’s word on any subject.

**God-joined marriage is only between a man and woman.** While marriage is a covenant between two human beings, a unique thing about the

marriage covenant is the fact that God is said to be the One who actually joins two people together who have the right to marry. Scripture teaches that God acts as **“witness”** between a man and his **“wife by covenant”** (Mal. 2:14). For those who have the right to make such a covenant it is God who can **“make them one”** (Mal. 2:15). It is because of this fact that Jesus teaches **“what God has joined together, let not man separate”** (Matt. 19:6). A covenant made between those lawfully bound to another mate, or between those forbidden to enter into such a covenant is an unlawful covenant. God never joins two people in any unlawful union!

**Governments can’t make wrong right.**

Isaiah proclaimed long ago, **“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil”** (Isa. 5:20). The preacher, in the book of Ecclesiastes urged the reader to, **“Consider the**



**work of God”** asking the question, **“for who can make straight what He has made crooked?”** (Ecc. 7:13). No human being, government, church, or political leader can make something God has declared to be sinful right!

**Christians must continue to proclaim truth.** Nearly 2000 years ago Paul urged the Philippians to be **“blameless and harm-**

**less, children of God”** living **“without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation”** (Phil. 2:15a). They were not to become hermits, or cut themselves off from all contact with such a **“perverse”** world. Instead, they were to have an impact. In a world of darkness they were to **“shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life”** (Phil. 2:15b-16a). That responsibility has not changed—it is our duty today.

Christians should not ignore the clear dangers the court’s ruling poses to our nation, families, and churches, but neither should we allow the sinful actions of ungodly political leaders to lead us to discouragement, timidity, or despair. Paul warned long ago that, **“evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse”** (2 Tim.3:13). When this takes the form of political action we, like Daniel, must open our windows (so to speak) looking toward the New Jerusalem in heaven. We mustn’t hide, or keep silent, but kneel down and continue to worship and proclaim our God to a wicked and dying world, as has been our **“custom since early days.”**



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# *Welcome Visitors*

**We are so glad that you joined us today.  
Please come again.**

**● Let us know if you have any questions.**