

October 2019

Dear Friends and Supporters,

We are now beginning to reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7) of the LGBTQ+ agenda. It began with the SCOTUS case of *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) which declared the criminal sodomy laws unconstitutional and then followed by the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) which declared same-sex marriage constitutional. These cases, along with several others, moved fairly quickly through the courts laying the foundation for significant changes to American culture. This month's Educational Update explains Alabama's new marriage law. This law was directly the result of the *Obergefell* decision and changes the process for marriage in Alabama.

Religious freedom is the issue. You are aware of the *Masterpiece* baker case from Colorado. A Christian baker there did not want to prepare special wedding cakes for same-sex weddings. His case went to SCOTUS and while he prevailed, the strength of the court opinion has not prevented further action against him as well as similar cases in other states.

Aside from the marriage issue, there are many other changes. There was a bill introduced in the Alabama Legislature last year which would have amended the public school sex education laws to omit a reference to homosexuality being improper. While the bill did not pass, nevertheless, that cannot be taught now. This will raise important family discussions about religious values.

The largest obstacle to the LGBTQ+ agenda is the beliefs of Christians. The church stands in the way of otherwise full cultural acceptance of their rights. While most of us do not discriminate, when we do not condone such activities, we are condemned. When SLI authored a bill to protect Christian-based child placing agencies in Alabama from being required to make same-sex adoption placements, we were said to be filled with hate. When the *Masterpiece* baker did not want to bake the cake, he was said to be filled with hate. In media and political commentary, those who do not accept the LGBTQ+ agenda are filled with hate. They fail to recognize Christ's compelling love for us and in turn our love and concern for our fellow man. At the same time, they also fail to recognize our commitment to true religion and its teaching.

SLI will continue to work to protect those religious rights. We support efforts to protect those rights, such as the U.S. Department of Labor's new rule protecting religious employers from claims of LGBTQ+ discrimination. Thank you for your continuing support of our efforts. With personal regards, I am,

Yours very truly,

A. Eric Johnston