



Truth Baptist Church

Independent ~ Bible-believing ~ Missionary

Brad Ingram

Pastor

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I strongly favor the passage of **HB 36**, also known as the “*Pastor Protection Act.*” My support of this legislation grows out of my sincerely-held religious convictions. In my opinion, this proposed legislation deals with the free exercise of each pastor’s philosophy of ministry; I truly believe my personal philosophy of ministry is the result of my understanding of theology and I assume many pastors would feel the same. Therefore, I am bound by conscience to discharge the duties of my office as pastor in a manner I believe to be congruent with Scripture.

With regard to the issue of solemnizing a same-sex marriage, I am instructed by the example of Christ to endorse only those marriage unions that adhere to the biblical pattern of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:22). During His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus attended a marriage ceremony and gave His approval to the union by using the occasion to perform His first miracle (John 2). The Lord was not compelled to attend this event; He freely chose to approve of the union by His very presence. As a minister of Christ, I am called to follow His example- **1 Peter 2:21** “*For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*” I, therefore, oppose any effort to force my endorsement of any union that I believe to be at odds with the pattern of the first marriage between a man and a woman- **Mark 10:7** “*For this cause shall a **man** leave his father and mother, and cleave to his **wife.**”*

However, the matter of same-sex marriage is only one aspect of the protection that is afforded by this proposed legislation. There are other unions involving a man and a woman that I have (and will) refuse to solemnize because I believe such a union is contrary to the Word of God. For example, I believe a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever is anti-Scriptural- **2 Corinthians 6:14** “*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.*” In my opinion, this resolution would further preserve my freedom to refuse to solemnize any union I believe to be against the principles of the Christian faith.

In conclusion, my support of this legislation in no way negates my genuine concern for all souls no matter the lifestyle they might have chosen. I, along with the congregation I serve, stand ready to minister to all those who seek to be ministered to.

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