

Smoky Mountain Reflections #170

“I am personally against abortion but it is the law of the land”. “I am for traditional marriage but the Obergefell v Hodges case made genderless marriage the “law of the land”. “It’s the law of the land” seems to be a popular phrase among politicians who want to excuse themselves from inconvenient protests against such laws. As Christians, however, we don’t obey laws *simply because they are the law of the land*, we obey laws because God has placed governments and their officials over us for our good and admonishes us in his word to obey the ruling authorities to the extent that we can without violating his laws. Luther stood against Rome pointing out that Popes and Councils erred whenever they departed from scriptural truth; in the same way, we as Christians must stand against laws that depart from God’s truth. In our democratic system, through good citizenship we can and should attempt to effect positive change when our leaders go astray. We have done it before and we have been called by our creator and our time to stand for God and his truth as we speak it in love (in accord with Ephesians 4:15) regarding life and family ethics, and obey God rather than men (in accord with Acts 5:29).

When the supreme court gets it wrong, dedicated Christian citizens need to speak the truth in love to help about Gods moral standard of truth. The separation of church and state does not remove our freedom to live and act in accord with our faith. The first amendment protects our right as American citizens to exercise our faith and speak freely about it in any setting, even on the campuses of our schools. And we as Christian citizens are called to speak the truth in love to our neighbors when the Supreme Court gets it wrong as they have numerous times in the past, and to seek with the help of God and our neighbors to set things right so that our laws would promote and protect lives and families in accordance with God’s word.

Decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court can only be over turned or superseded in two ways: by constitutional amendment, or by the Supreme Court overruling itself.

There are many examples of the court reversing decisions. Many have nothing to do with morals or faith, but it shows there is a process to correct poor decisions by previous courts. When the Supreme Court changes its position it changes US legal precedence; sometimes making things better and sometimes making them worse. We will avoid a list of good decisions that later were overturned and focus on the times the Supreme Court ruled wrongly and was corrected later by one of the aforementioned mechanisms.

- 1857: The Dred Scott decision declared that black people were inferior to whites, weren't and couldn't be U.S. citizens, and had no rights. It took the Emancipation Proclamation, a civil war and two amendments to fix.
- 1883: The Supreme Court upheld a law forbidding mixed marriage, then overturned it in 1967.
- 1896: The Supreme Court upheld “Separate but Equal” laws, then overturned the decision in 1954.
- 1944: The Supreme Court upheld Japanese internment camps (some reparations were made but this decision is still in force today as we sacrifice civil liberties for safety).
- 1973: The Roe v Wade decision declared that the unborn are not people and had no rights. In the words of one of the current presidential candidates, “unborn persons have no rights under the law”. (Hilary Clinton April 16)
- 2015: Obergefell v Hodges declared genderless marriage the law of the land.

Because of the last two decisions on that list, your first amendment rights to exercise your faith and speak freely about it are under attack. Make no mistake about it: the abortion industry wants to use the government to make you pay directly and indirectly for what they do. The radical LGBT agenda is to get everyone to celebrate who they are and what they stand for. Human sin does not want to simply live and let live. As we try to speak the truth in love we will be condemned as judgmental, bigoted, homophobic, and misogynistic, even while the very people who make these accusations do so in a judgmental, bigoted way. Take comfort though; there is nothing new under the sun. God will prevail; he is in control of all things even though we do not understand how. Keep Matthew 7:24-27 in mind as you pursue God's truth.

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of

mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Press on, be wise, and seek to do his will in your life.

In Christ,
Pastor Portier