



# The Good News

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## ***Are we standing for, or ashamed of, God's Word?***

By Michael McCleary

This is a question that we must all ask ourselves. As our society travels further and further down the path of godlessness, we are tested more and more as our society becomes saturated with displays of sinful conduct. Any suggestion of condemnation or the refusal to agree and approve of sinful conduct can cause great hardship for those seeking to stand for the truth of God's Word. Even more concerning, laws at some state and federal levels are being considered that defines as Hate Speech any suggestion that identifies certain conduct as sinful. The enactment and enforcement of such laws could extend to pulpits in churches across America. This would amount to censorship of what can be taught in churches. This would've sounded ridiculously Orwellian 20 years ago, but not anymore. If such a law were to be passed in our state or country, what would our reaction be? Would we abide by the law of the land and remove all mention of sinful conduct from our teaching? Would we only remove it from being mentioned in the pulpit but still teach about it in our bulletins or classes? Or would we continue to teach the "whole counsel of God"? These questions must be asked because there would be consequences that we must be prepared to accept. How far will we go to stand for the truth?

Will we go as far as simply accepting fines for violations of the law? This seems like a simple and easy way to deal with the problem, but unfortunately, while this is where penalties may start, it is most certainly not where penalties will end. Eventually, it will lead to extremely large fines, perhaps going as far as the imprisonment of those who preach against certain conduct. Bad publicity

may come to into play as different media report on all the churches that tolerate "hate speech" from their pulpits. This could lead to persecution when others learn that we are a member of one of these churches. Where the initial law may only censor talk of sinful conduct, amendments could easily be made to stamp out other topics that society deems to be "misinformation" or "bigoted". We must understand that the precedent for this is being set now as our society continues down the path of intolerance toward anyone who does not conform to their standard of immorality.

How far will we go to stand for the truth? As we pray to God about the situation in our society and in our government, we must come to terms with the fact that the freedoms that generations of Christians have enjoyed in this country may soon come to an end. A pruning time may be coming...separating those who only claim to be Christians from those who truly are Christians. How many of us will stay strong for the truth against a society bent on tolerating sin? How many of us will be part of those who are pruned?

*"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the Gospel according to the power of God..." (II Tim. 1:8)*