

Homosexual "Privacy" & Church "Autonomy"

Homosexuals make the argument that they have the right to do whatever they want in the "privacy" of their homes. In other words, they want to act in a way that is against nature and shameful without any interference (Rom. 1:26-28). Homosexuals do not want the law of the land stopping them or punishing them for their perverted behavior. Several weeks ago they won their case before the United States Supreme Court when it struck down a Texas law banning sodomy. Now it appears all laws outlawing homosexual behavior are invalid, and they have a "right to privacy."

This reminds us of those who argue that church "autonomy" (privacy) gives them the right to do whatever they want in a local church. We realize the Bible teaches churches are autonomous--self governing. Elders are to shepherd the flock "among them" (1 Pet. 5:2). They are to "take heed to [themselves] and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made [them] overseers" (Acts 20:28). Elders are not authorized to oversee another church or churches in any way, nor are they to turn their job over or subordinate themselves to another church or set of elders. This is where the institutional-liberals went awry with the sponsoring church. It violates church autonomy. This is not what the current problems are about among brethren.

Rather, as was stated, some say they have the right to do whatever they wish to do because of "autonomy." They say others do not have the right to condemn them for their decisions, actions or teachings. They say, "You are violating our autonomy when you speak against us. You are trying to run this church." Such is ridiculous. Autonomy only exists within the confines of God's law. A church does not have any right to act contrary to the gospel. If a church is violating the gospel, that church needs to be censured (cf. Revelation 2, 3; Galatians, 1 Corinthians). Paul told Timothy to "reprove, rebuke and exhort" and to "watch in all things" (2 Tim. 4:2, 5). Christians are to raise their voices against sin wherever it may be, including churches of which they are not members; churches where sin is being tolerated or endorsed. "Autonomy" does not shield a congregation from rebuke.

Homosexuals won their fight for "privacy" in the United States Supreme Court. Some brethren are fighting hard to establish a principle not found in God's word, "privacy" to do as they wish. The difference is, the "Supreme Court" of heaven will not allow it--ever.

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