

Craig James Sues Fox Sports After Being Fired for Views on Homosexuality

Craig James, who was fired by Fox Sports Southwest (FSSW) over his biblical beliefs on homosexuality, is taking the company to court concerning his termination.

Liberty Institute sent a letter to Fox Sports officials last week on James' behalf, demanding his immediate reinstatement. The letter was ignored, so a lawsuit was filed in Collin County, northeast of Dallas.

The former Southern Methodist University and NFL player was dismissed by Fox Sports after just one day on the air. FSSW General Manager Jon Heidtke called James on Sept. 1 to inform him he had been fired. According to Breitbart News, Heidtke—who also hired James—said a higher-up in the network had been made aware of James' comments about same-sex marriage during his unsuccessful 2012 run for the Senate.

"At Fox Sports we respect all points of view, and despite reports to the contrary, the decision to no longer use Craig James in our college football coverage was simply because he was not a good fit for Fox Sports," reads a statement from last week regarding James' dismissal.

"Mr. James, while both experienced and knowledgeable, is a polarizing figure in the college sports community," the statement continues. "Regrettably, the decision to use him was not properly vetted, and as a result he will no longer provide commentary on Fox Sports Southwest's college football coverage."

Brietbart News says the statement is a complete contradiction, since the *Dallas Morning News* quoted a Fox Sports spokesperson

saying right after James's firing, "We just asked ourselves how Craig's statements would play in our human resources department. He couldn't say those things here."

James, a former ESPN and CBS broadcaster, was asked about same-sex marriage in an April 2012 primary debate. He replied, "People choose to be gay. ... I think it's a choice. I do. Same-sex marriage, if someone chooses to do that, that's done. And God's going to judge each one of us in this room for our actions. And in that case right there, they're going to have to answer to the Lord for their actions."

James says he will not give up seeking justice.

"If Fox Sports has learned anything from me, it's that I'm not going to take a punch to the face and give up," James told Breitbart News. "I'm going to see justice through on this."

Liberty Institute Director of Litigation Hiram Sasser says that Liberty will stand with James and hold Fox Sports accountable for its actions.

"Fox Sports is just trying to ride this thing out and hope this all goes away," Sasser told Breitbart. "But you can't go around torching people's reputation in public based on religious bigotry, and then hope that something in the news cycle wipes it out of American's mind. That's not an appropriate way to do business or treat people."

Last week, Matt Shaheen, a county commissioner in Collin County—where James is a resident—drafted a letter to Fox Sports on behalf of 800,000 county members, expressing his concern and demanding the network return James to his position.

"Your action is an affront to your customers, your nation and is contrary to the principle of religious freedom," Shaheen wrote.

Some have been critical of James for speaking out, but he reminds people that this issue is bigger than just him.

"This isn't about me individually," James told Bretibart. "People might not care for me as a broadcaster. This is about what has happened to a religious individual in America. It's given me a sense of responsibility for others who may be in my same position who may not be in a position to stand up and fight."

The first scheduled legal hearing on the case will be on Nov. 5.