

'God Has a Bigger Plan,' Says Persecuted Navy Chaplain

Lt. Commander Wes Modder is a Navy chaplain in danger of losing his career because of his Bible-based counseling.

During his tenure he advised sailors from the perspective of an Assemblies of God minister. But after a few service members at his base complained about Modder's biblical views late last year, his commander asked the Navy to consider discharging the Modder just one year short of retirement.

Military chaplains aren't accustomed to being in the public spotlight. And with the ordinary chaplain duties Modder performed at his naval base, he certainly never expected it.

"As far as me being surprised, initially you know I was shocked. It's an unintended place that I'm in," Modder told CBN News.

Modder and some other conservative chaplains are in the crosshairs of a military that has rapidly swung from discharging homosexuals to now embracing gay marriage.

"It's really about culture colliding with truth," Modder said. "And so I know I'm the face and the focal point, but this is really about the culture being obedient to a holy God."

Now chaplains like Modder are having to fight for their own legal First Amendment rights, lest all military members lose them.

"We need to stand up for truth and religious liberty. We have to stand for that," he said.

His wife Beth says she hates to see her husband of 21 years face charges he was offensive, insulting and judgmental to some he counseled.

"It's hard to see him go through this," Beth Modder said. "You know, it's not in his character to be like these accusations say."

But she and their four kids are backing him in this battle.

"I don't want to over-spiritualize this," Chaplain Modder said. "I really believe I'm doing the will of God by standing my ground."

He's at peace, though, with the fact his Christianity may cost him his career.

"If it goes bad as maybe the world would see it, I believe that God has a bigger plan, bigger perspective on my life, and I'm putting my trust and my hope and my confidence in Christ Jesus," he told CBN News.

Chaplains are often seen as the very embodiment of religion in the military, so if the Navy decides to punish one of its chaplains for trying to faithfully represent his religion, many fear that will likely to send a chill through the heart of every service member and make them wonder whether practicing of their faith is safe.