

The Christian Purge Has Begun: Chaplains Banned From Preaching Homosexuality Is a Sin

It wasn't so much a choice as it was a demand.

Chaplain David Wells was told he could either sign a state-mandated document promising to never tell inmates that homosexuality is "sinful" or else the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice would revoke his credentials.

"We could not sign that paper," Chaplain Wells told me in a telephone call from his home in Kentucky. "It broke my heart."

The Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice revoked his volunteer credentials as an ordained minister—ending 13 years of ministry to underage inmates at the Warren County Regional Juvenile Detention Center.

"We sincerely appreciate your years of service and dedication to the youth served by this facility," wrote Superintendent Gene Wade in a letter to Wells. "However, due to your decision, based on your religious convictions, that you cannot comply with the requirements outlined in DJJ Policy 912, Section IV, Paragraph H, regarding the treatment of LGBTQI youth, I must terminate your involvement as a religious volunteer."

Wells said that every volunteer in their church received the letter—as did a Baptist church in a nearby community.

The Kentucky regulation clearly states that volunteers working with juveniles "shall not refer to juveniles by using derogatory language in a manner that conveys bias toward or

hatred of the LGBTQI community. DJJ staff, volunteers, interns and contractors shall not imply or tell LGBTQI juveniles that they are abnormal, deviant, sinful or that they can or should change their sexual orientation or gender identity.”

For years, Wells and his team have conducted volunteer worship services and counseling to troubled young people—many of whom have been abused.

“I sat across the table from a 16-year-old boy who was weeping and broken over the life he was in,” Wells said. “He had been abused as a child and turned to alcohol and drugs to cope. He wanted to know if there was any hope for him.”

Wells said he had been abused as a young child—so he knew he could answer this young man’s question.

“I was able to look at him and tell him the saving power of Jesus Christ that delivered me—could deliver him,” he said.

But under the state’s 2014 anti-discrimination policy, Wells would not be allowed to have such a discussion should it delve into LGBT issues.

“They told us we could not preach that homosexuality is a sin—period,” Wells told me. “We would not have even been able to read Bible verses that dealt with LGBT issues.”

For the record, Wells said they’ve never used hateful or derogatory comments when dealing with the young inmates.

“They are defining hateful or derogatory as meaning what the Bible says about homosexuality,” he told me.

Mat Staver, the founder of Liberty Counsel, is representing Wells. He said the state’s ban on biblical counseling is unconstitutional religious discrimination.

“There is no question there is a purging underway,” Staver told me. “The dissenters in the recent Supreme Court decision

on gay marriage warned us this would happen.”

Staver is demanding the state immediately reinstate Wells as well as the other volunteer ministers.

“By restricting speech which volunteers are allowed to use while ministering to youth detainees, the State of Kentucky and the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice have violated the protections given to private speech through the First Amendment and the Kentucky Constitution,” Staver wrote in his letter to state officials.

He said the policy “requires affirmation of homosexuality as a precondition for ministers providing spiritual guidance to troubled youth, and singles out a particular theological viewpoint as expressly disfavored by the State of Kentucky.”

In other words—Kentucky has a religious litmus test when it comes to homosexuality—and according to the *Lexington Herald-Leader*—they aren’t going to back down.

The DJJ told the newspaper that the regulation “is neutral as to religion and requires respectful language toward youth by all staff, contractors and volunteers.”

State Sen. Gerald Neal, a Democrat, dared Christians to challenge the law in court.

“I’m just disappointed that the agendas by some are so narrow that they disregard the rights of others,” he told the newspaper. “Let them sue and let the courts settle it.”

Among those backing Wells is the American Pastors Network.

“Pastors and all Americans must wake up to the reality of expanding efforts to cleanse our nation of all moral truth,” APN President Sam Rohrer said in a statement. “When pastors and all Christians ... are forced by government agents to renounce sharing the very reality of sin, they are in fact being prohibited from sharing the healing and life-changing

potential of redemption.”

Folks, I warned you this would happen. The Christian purge has begun—and it’s only a matter of time before all of us will be forced to make the same decision Chaplain Wells had to make.

Will you follow God or the government?

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