

JULY 12, 2015

WELCOME VISITORS: We trust you will find your visit with us enriching. If you would like to know more about our church or wish to speak with one of the elders or the pastor, please contact them personally following this morning's worship. Our Elders are Ken McAuley, Thom Rachford and Pastor Andrew Kikkert. Please join us for coffee or tea following worship.

A WORD ON WORSHIP

Ezekiel 14: 19-20

"Or if I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it, even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness."

But maybe you're thinking, "Does God have favorites? I thought that He received everyone equally." The answer is, God may not have favorites, but He does have intimates. Some people have connections with God in a way that others do not. When they pray, God listens. In at least two Scriptures, God acknowledges that certain men had special influence with Him. In Jeremiah 15:1, God tells the prophet that even if Moses and Samuel were to stand before Him, His heart would not be with this people, so great is their sin. The implication is that these two men normally had special influence, although in this case, even they would not prevail. This week we will look at Ezekiel 14, where God tells Ezekiel that even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were to pray for this people, He would not grant deliverance, except to these men alone

That's the context of Ezekiel 14. The city of Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed, but it now was inevitable because God had determined that it must be judged as a testimony of His separation from His people's sin. God had graciously warned them over and over for centuries. But finally they had crossed the line. Now, not even the prayers of righteous Noah, Daniel, or Job could prevail.

We make a serious mistake if we think that God's patience has no limit. His grace is great. His patience goes much farther than human patience ever could go. But there is a limit. There's a limit nationally, when God as sovereign says, "That's enough!" He told Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved in another land for 400 years and then they would return to the land of Canaan. Then God added, "for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete" (Gen. 15:16). God was patient with the immoral Canaanites for more than 400 years, but then He said, "That's enough!" and commanded Israel to destroy them in judgment. Nations, like ours, that turn from the knowledge of God are presuming on His grace.

Also, there is a limit to God's patience personally. If we have not responded to His grace, we face that limit at death, which can strike at any moment. But, also, it can come when a person repeatedly hardens his heart against God. He crosses a line where he is so confirmed in sin that even the prayers of the righteous for his salvation will not prevail. We never know for sure when that line is crossed. We know that God is both just and merciful. But the fact that the line exists ought to make us tremble at the thought of continuing in our sinful ways. "Seek the Lord while He may be found." (Isaiah 55:6)

Pastor Andrew Kikkert



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Share Your Faith
with Others...

Then Light a Candle

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we do something special on Sundays.

On the communion table we place 12 unlit candles. The candles are there as a witness for us or a witness against us in sharing our faith. If a person shares their faith during the week, they are to light one of the candles.

In that way, every week we have a living "memorial" to hold us accountable for sharing our faith. If you share your faith, you should light one of the candles. If not, then you should look for opportunities to share your faith.

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16460-RESPONSES-TO-THE-GOSPEL

What's Happening at Sunrise

July 2015

July 12	8:45 AM	<i>The Men Who Had Connections with God</i> Ezekiel 14 Verses 12 to 20
	10:30 AM	Digging Deeper in Second Hour
July 9		Bible Study at Kikkerts on Summer Break <i>As always, study on your own, daily.</i>
July 17	6:30 PM	Friday Night Fellowship
July 19	8:45 AM	New series: Seven Letters to Churches from Revelation Message 1: The Purpose of Prophecy
	10:30 AM	Digging Deeper in Second Hour
July 19	7:00 PM	Game Night
July 26	8:45 AM	Seven Letters to Churches from Revelation <i>continues</i>
	10:30 AM	Digging Deeper in Second Hour

Christian bakers fined \$135,000 for refusing to make wedding cake for lesbians

By Todd Starnes • www.foxnews.com

The owners of a mom and pop bakery have just learned there is a significant price to pay for following their religious beliefs. Aaron and Melissa Klein, the owners of Sweet Cakes By Melissa, have been ordered to pay \$135,000 in damages to a lesbian couple after they refused to bake them a wedding cake in 2013.

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI) awarded \$60,000 to Laurel Bowman-Cryer and \$75,000 in damages to Rachel Bowman-Cryer for "emotional suffering." "This case is not about a wedding cake or a marriage," the final order read. "It is about a business's refusal to serve someone because of their sexual orientation. Under Oregon law, that is illegal."

According to the BOLI, the lesbian couple suffered great angst. One of the women "felt depressed and questioned whether there was something inherently wrong with the sexual orientation she was born with." They said she had "difficulty controlling her emotions and cried a lot." The other woman "experienced extreme anger, outrage, embarrassment, exhaustion, frustration, intense sorrow and shame" simply because the Kleins refused to provide them with a wedding cake.

Jeez. That must have been one heck of a cake. It sounds as if the state of Oregon is sending a stern warning to Christian business owners like the Kleins.

"Within Oregon's public accommodations law is the basic principle of human decency that every person, regardless of their sexual orientation, has the freedom to fully participate in society," the ruling states. "The ability to enter public places, to shop and dine, to move about unfettered by bigotry."

Does The Bureau of Labor and Industry truly believe that Christians who want to follow the teachings of their faith are bigots?

It certainly seems to me the only entity guilty of unfettered bigotry is the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industry. Since the day they turned away the lesbian couple's business, the Kleins have suffered greatly. Their business was subjected to boycotts and pickets. LGBT activists and their supporters threatened any wedding vendor that did business with Sweet Cakes By Melissa.

Mrs. Klein told me her five children were subjected to death threats — death threats for simply refusing to participate in a same-sex wedding. That doesn't sound very tolerant to me.