



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Years ago, I remember hearing a story on the radio about a psychological study. This study would ask people: If you could choose one superpower, flight or invisibility, which would you choose and why? Most of the participants in the study ended up choosing the power of invisibility, but what struck me was the reason why they choose that power. Many of these people were intrigued by invisibility precisely because it empowered them to do things that were wrong. “If I were invisible,” one person said, “I could just walk into a store and take anything I wanted.”

Now, as Christians, that shouldn’t surprise us. We know the sinfulness of our own hearts, and we know that invisibility is dangerous. It has always been that way. The question your ERLC is asking to the watching world, though, is similar: Who are the people that we wish to keep invisible? Our culture assumes that life is only worth living when it is powerful and of a perceived usefulness. But we believe that every human being bears the dignity rooted in the image of God.

That’s why, over the course of this year, we have been active in courts and in Congress throughout the year. We’ve fought for legislation, filed briefs in courts around the country, and made arguments on behalf of unborn children, religious liberty, family stability, and human dignity. We’ve stood with Guidestone and our Baptist colleges over against the Obamacare contraceptive mandate. In the wake of the Supreme Court’s decision on same-sex marriage, we have continued to speak a word of prophetic witness and dissent, but we also have sought to equip Christians and churches to come behind this cultural moment with the knowledge that the Sexual Revolution cannot deliver on its promises. We must be the people who pick up the wreckage left in its wake with the offer of living water, as we engage a culture that does not recognize many of the things we believe like the union embedded in marriage or the promise of the gospel to which it points.

Beyond that, we have also devoted ourselves to equipping churches for these challenging times. We’ve spearheaded major events on Capitol Hill, connecting pastors with legislators, equipping churches on how to stand and speak for our unborn children and their mothers. We’ve created resources pastors can give to their members and that small groups and Sunday School classes can use together. We have also partnered with our seminaries to train next-generation pastors and leaders to help them think ahead of time about the sort of questions they likely never had to ask or answer before, but will inevitably be required to in the years ahead.

The last year has seen an ugly uptick in racial bigotry, and we have worked to make clear that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is one family, and one body, and an attack on one part of the body is an attack on the whole. As the rest of the world retreats back into blood-and-soil racism, we will recognize what that is: hellish idolatry. Not only that, but we will work to model another way, of a community of brothers and sisters reconciled to God and to one another.

As we serve our churches and engage the world around us with the gospel, we’re determined not to be fearful or panicky people. This is our mission field, and no matter what goes on in the culture, we understand what has been told to us and handed down for centuries. We realize that no matter how much one might seek to be invisible, or to keep others invisible, there is a Light from which no one and nothing can hide. This Light has come into the world, and the darkness has not—the darkness will not, the darkness cannot—overcome it.

For the kingdom,

Russell D. Moore
President