



# Christian Citizenship

**“You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world” (Mt. 5:13-16). One way to be salty and let our light shine is by being good citizens on earth. Our vocation as citizens of both the secular kingdom and God’s kingdom gives us the responsibility to proclaim God’s Word and care for our neighbors. We are called to engage the “public square” with our message of Christ’s mercy for all. Please pray for God’s will to be done... in Jesus’ name.**

---

## **Masterpiece Indeed!**

When one visits Jack Phillips, the cake artist and owner of Masterpiece Cakes in Lakewood, CO., they are greeted by a humble man who just wants to faithfully use his God-given talents and provide for his family. Jack has served his community for 23 years, watching children grow up, get married, and become parents. To Jack, every life is a masterpiece created by God. Of course, this means that God the Creator defines the meaning of human life... and things like marriage.

In July of 2012, two men came into Masterpiece Cakes to ask Jack if he would design a wedding cake for their same-sex wedding. Because Jack’s faith motivates how he runs his business, Jack declined the request. He offered to sell them a pre-made cake, but he could not design and promote a same-sex wedding ceremony. The two men were angry and, within a short time, they filed a complaint with the Colorado Civil Rights Commission for sexual orientation discrimination. Jack and his staff were ordered to design cakes for same-sex wedding celebrations, go through a “re-education” program, implement new policies to comply with the commission’s order, and file quarterly “compliance” reports for two years to show that Jack has eliminated his religious beliefs from his business. Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to take up Jack’s case. The Supreme Court has granted review and oral arguments will likely be scheduled by the end of this year.

How does Jack respond when fellow Christians pay him a visit? He admits that he doesn’t like all of the attention, nor doing radio and TV interviews.

“But, the Lord is at work here. I can trust that.” Sure enough. Imprinted on the coffee mugs for sale in Jack’s shop is Ephesians 2:10 (NLT): “For we are God’s Masterpiece...He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago...”

**What can we do?** Follow the details of the case at [www.adflegal.org/detailspages/case-details/masterpiece-cake-shop-v.-craig](http://www.adflegal.org/detailspages/case-details/masterpiece-cake-shop-v.-craig) Another case you should be aware of is that of Judge Ruth Neely who has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse the Wyoming court censure against her which has driven her from a magistrate judge position to that of a municipal judge. Neely’s case is also about free speech and her religious conflict with officiating at same-sex weddings. Neely is a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Pinedale, WY., and is being represented by ADF.

***Please pray for those who are being punished because they speak God’s Word... in Jesus’ name.***

## **The U.S. Extreme Position on Abortion**

*The Washington Post* recently reported that “the United States is currently out of the mainstream in the family of nations, in which only 7 out of 198 nations allow elective abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy.” *The Washington Post* sorted the seven countries, from the most liberal on the gestational limits to the least.

Here’s what they found: North Korea and Vietnam: No specified gestational limit, though regulatory mechanisms vary. China: “Abortion is virtually freely available in China, and there are no defined time limits for access to the procedure” (Pew Research Center). China’s “two-child” policy has been criticized by human-rights advocates.

United States: No federal ban on gestational limit, but 43 states have prohibitions on gestational limits, from 20 to 24 weeks, or the point of “viability,” according to the Guttmacher Institute,

which is a reproductive rights research group and division of Planned Parenthood.

Then came Canada, Netherlands and Singapore. Only North Korea, Vietnam and China are ahead of the U.S. in abortion extremism. (Source: Sheila Liaugminas, Mercatornet, Oct. 12, 2017.)

**What can we do?** Tell your children and grandchildren that God is the Creator of the unborn (Ps. 139:13-16; Eccl. 11:5; Is. 44:2; Luke 1:41-44). Discuss the Fifth Commandment and its meaning. Visit your local caring pregnancy center or [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org). Watch little boys and girls suck their thumbs or curl up for a nap in the womb via ultrasound technology.

**Please pray** for hearts and minds to welcome the little ones... in Jesus' name.

### **Transgender in Kindergarten**

Nova Classical Academy in St. Paul, MN., is ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the top Minnesota high school. "But," writes Joy Pullman, "it has been transformed into a rainbow Trojan horse after Dave and Hannah Edwards sued Nova for not including pro-transgender materials starting in kindergarten to accommodate their five-year-old son, whom they claim is transgender. Parents began transferring their kindergarteners out of the child's class when they came home saying things like, 'Mom, I think you can choose if you want to be a boy or girl,' according to interviews with the Daily Signal."

The little boy, Pullman explains, "began wearing a female uniform and accessories, and classes began to include pro-trans picture books endorsing gender fluidity." What else is going on? Pullman points out that after 16 months of litigation, a settlement "requires the school to make all uniforms available to both sexes, pay LGBT organizations to 'train staff' in politically correct behavior every three years and 'not adopt any gender policy that allows parents to opt out of requirements in the gender inclusion policy because of objections based on religion or conscience.'" Careful review of the settlement reveals that the school is banned "from even notifying parents of its sex policies."

What should alert all of us, however, is that Dave Edwards, the father of the five-year-old kindergartner, is an academic at the University of Minnesota's Department of Psychology, "whose pending PhD is being funded by taxpayer-funded grant and who specializes in transgender education [and,] as a school consultant and trainer on gender identity, he now personally profits from doing 'training' of the kind his family's settlement forces on Nova." GenderInclusiveSchools.com is Edwards' website. (Source: "The Trans Juggernaut Wants Your Kids, And Public Schools Are Just The Beginning" by Joy Pullman in *The Federalist*.)

**What can we do?** We should not bend to the suggestion that discrimination against LGBT students on the basis of religion is no different than racial discrimination. Race or ethnicity is not a behavior or a choice. Letters to the editor are public venues for kind dialogue. Ask questions that help people think. Should women and children be placed at risk because of gender-neutral, public bathrooms? Is it wise to disregard the report of the American College of Pediatricians? These pediatricians have concluded that: "Conditioning children into believing a lifetime of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful is child abuse."

**Please pray** for moms, dads, and society to see children created in God's image and for His purpose... in Jesus' name.

### **Where Can Boys Be Boys?**

Boys no longer have many places left to be boys. As Trevin Wax put it at The Gospel Coalition, boys are running out of paths toward manhood—something the Boy Scouts long provided. Our culture right now is obsessed with obliterating both distinct paths and distinct roles, demanding everyone be the same, even though they're not. Though the rallying cry is diversity, in reality we're committed to monotony—no boys, no girls, no husbands, no wives, no men, no women, no right, no wrong." ...The Boy Scouts aren't the only casualty of this revolution, but they are one worth mourning. (Source: John Stonestreet, Breakpoint, 10/18/17.)

**Please pray** that God's will, not ours, be done.