

# THE FOREST HILL NEWS

Published weekly by the Forest Hill church of Christ

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## **Forest Hill Church of Christ**

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Leonard Watson

### **Minister:**

Barry M. Grider

## **VISIT US SOON!**

### **Sunday:**

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.  
Morning Worship... 10:30 A.M.  
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

### **Wednesday:**

Bible Study .....7:00 P.M.

## **HOME OF MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

### **Missions Supported:**

Iglesia de Cristo Memphis  
Kakinada, India  
Manila, Philippines  
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Far East/World Evangelism  
In Search of the Lord's Way

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## **HOMOSEXUALITY: THIS IS WHERE WE PART WAYS**

Brad Harrub  
Apologetics Press

The phone call was like many we receive at our offices. Someone had come across an article on our web site and wanted to talk to someone about it. In the course of our conversation, the young man spoke passionately about his beliefs, defending what he felt was right. About fifteen minutes into the conversation, he made the following comment: "Yes, I feel like I must speak up and be heard, similar to the homosexuals today who desire equal rights." Up until that moment, we were having a healthy conversation and were both able to communicate various views and ideas. But with those words, our conversation took an abrupt turn. I told this young man that this is where he and I "were definitely going to part ways." (Obviously, this individual was not familiar with Apologetics Press and our stance to defend New Testament Christianity).

Having struck a nerve, the caller asked me if I was kidding. In amazement, he went on to comment that he could not believe I did not want all people to "share equal rights." I assured him that all people were created in the "image and likeness" of God (Gen. 1:26-27), but that did not stop people from committing acts that God would not endorse (e.g., rape, murder, stealing). He then questioned my love for others, and asked, "how can someone who professes Christianity treat others with such disdain?" Sadly, the world has done an excellent job of teaching this young man that anyone who does not accept homosexuality is guilty of the worst type of sin-the sin of intolerance. I reassured him that I tried very hard to treat all humans in a loving manner, but that did not mean I (or, more important, God) approved of their actions. Our conversation continued for another fifteen minutes, as I continued reminding him that no matter how you slice it, the Bible-God's Word-viewed homosexual practices as **sin** (see 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rom. 1:26-32; Lev. 18:22). I kept reiterating the point that sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2), and as such, those who continued to practice such acts without repenting would spend eternity in torment.

Over and over this young man kept questioning why I would not want to give equal marriage rights to other "fellow human beings." And over and over I stated very simply that what I wanted did not really matter. Rather, God had set forth a plan, and we as obedient Christians are to follow that plan. The gentleman noted that legislation likely would be passed in my lifetime recognizing homosexual marriages as true unions. I conceded that, unfortunately, he probably was right, but I continued to stress that laws would not change this abomination in the eyes of the Lord (think-abortion). Changing tactics, he tried to discredit the Bible, but quickly

realized that was not going to be possible, given the resources I had at my fingertips. Looking for any means to put a chink in my argument, he stressed that the “majority” of Americans were now accepting homosexual couples. He pointed to the numerous examples that are clearly evident in our media. I told him that, yes I was aware that most sitcoms felt obligated to have a token “homosexual” couple in order to be politically correct. But I noted that I have just as much of an obligation to keep such material out of my household, just because Hollywood embraces it does not give it credence. I patiently reminded him that just because the majority accepted something (e.g., abortion, divorce), that did not make it right. I quoted Matthew 7:13-14, and mentioned that Christians were never going to be in the majority. We are to be transformed, not conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2). He laughed, and asked how I could believe in a God who would send the majority of people to hell. I responded by asking him how many people he knew who were willing to be **obedient to and serve** an all-powerful God. After his silence, I told him that God is not only a just God, but He also is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. I pointed out that, sadly, society has mischaracterized God as so “loving” that He will accept everyone and all of their actions. I reassured him that while society might continue to bow up their backs against God’s divine edicts, that did not change the **fact** that one day, **every** knee would bow (Phil. 2:10).

He pointed out that Americans were becoming more compliant; I repeated that made no difference—look at how our society now views marriage and divorce. Multiple marriages are common. In fact, some time ago, I was walking through airport security and a man in front of me laughed aloud and said to his two male friends, “who doesn’t have an ex-wife these days?” What a tragic commentary on our society! I told the young man on the phone that if someone were homosexual, he or she did have the ability to remain celibate—just like someone who has been divorced for unscriptural reasons. This young man could not have expressed more incredulity. He asked me if I really thought that men and women should remain celibate just because they were homosexual or happened to get out of a “bad” marriage. He said, “You can’t be serious.” I reminded him that the rewards in eternity far exceeded any earthly pleasures.

This young man then pointed out that he found it ironic that God had allowed homosexuals

to be “born like that.” Again, not realizing my background (anatomy and neurobiology), I quickly reminded him that scientists have completed the human genome this year, and not “homosexual” gene has ever been found—which is interesting, given all the time and money that has been focused on finding just such a genetic causative agent. Certainly, society wants the vast majority to believe that these individuals “cannot help themselves,” yet according to science, there are **no data** that support his “born with it” view. We ended our conversation with his asking me if I really thought that God would send people to hell simply because they acted on the “feelings” they had for members of the same sex. He could not fathom my simple response. I told him, “Yes, because the Bible says that is exactly **what He will do!**”

Friends, the vocal homosexual **minority** has had their fifteen minutes in the spotlight—their time is up! It’s high time Christians remind the world of the definition of sin. How long will we sit by idly and allow legislation to be passed that destroys God’s original plan for families? How long are we going to continue to support news and media networks that openly endorse gay relationships? Are we so intimidated that we have completely forgotten what God’s Word says on the matter? Has the homosexual agenda **succeeded** in characterizing everyone who does not accept their movement as tantamount to committing “hate crimes?” We shake our heads as denominations openly install a homosexual “bishop,” but what happens when a homosexual wants to work with the youth in a local congregation? Will we continue to remain passive? If homosexual marriages are acceptable, then why not go ahead and legalize bestiality, pedophilia, and polygamy—after all, these are simply individuals wanting their “equal rights.” How far are we going to let this go before we finally speak up and inform the world that homosexual acts are sin that bring about spiritual death (Rom. 6:23; Jam. 1:13-15)? This young man labeled me as a fundamentalist. If “fundamentalist” means that I am striving diligently to follow the directives set for in the bible, then I thank him for the compliment.

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#### PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR NATION

***“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14***

**Time's – A – Tickin'**  
Daniel Hope

A few days ago Heather and I were relaxing on our back porch just after the sun set on a day of beautiful weather. As the blackness stealthily took over the blue, the temperature outside remained perfect, and the moon and stars became visible in the cloudless sky. To our pleasure, we had picked a perfect night to wind down with the day.

But then, all-of-a-sudden, we felt a slight chill as a cool breeze invaded our back yard. We again gazed upward and noticed that the sky was now blanketed with clouds that were racing their way through the atmosphere. I continued to look upward while contemplating how quickly our natural world changes.

I then saw something that reminded me of the most sudden and most drastic change that this world will ever experience. There, sweeping across the sky in front of the moon, was a cloud shaped like an hourglass. This heavenly hourglass was a reminder to me that the end of life as we know it on Earth is constantly getting nearer with each passing moment. One of these days, Christ will return in judgment, and this sphere called Earth will become a gigantic fireball (2 Pet. 3:10).

When will this take place? The truth is, we don't know. At any moment, Christ could fulfill His promise and come down from Heaven to judge the world. Due to the imminence of Christ's surprise return, every generation since Christ's ascension has lived in the "last days" (2 Pet. 3:3). Each day—each moment—could be the last.

Peter was confident that Christ would return for two reasons—the transfiguration and the Truth (2 Pet. 1:16-21). The glory Peter saw when Heaven came down on Christ was a prelude to the glory we'll all see when Christ comes down from Heaven. Peter's confidence in Christ's return was further strengthened by the promises in Scripture regarding this coming cataclysmic event.

Since we, like Peter, have the assurance that Christ will return, our lives as Christians should be characterized by separation (2Pet. 3:11,14), devotion (v.11), expectation (v.12-14), exertion (v.14), and a good reputation (v.14). Ben McNally reminded me recently about a favorite phrase of Brother Dowell Flatt, one of our beloved professors at Freed-Hardeman University. He would often say, "The biggest difference between the first century church and the church today is that they actually believed Christ was coming back."

You don't need to see a heavenly hourglass; God's Word is reminder enough. Paul's statement is truer now than it ever was, "For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed" (Rom. 13:11). Start preparin'—'cause time's-a-tickin'.

(Daniel Hope preaches for the Great Oaks church of Christ in metropolitan Memphis)

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