



- Up Words # 55

## MAMMON MATTERS



On February 26<sup>th</sup> Republican Arizona Governor Jan Brewer vetoed that state's Senate bill 1062 that would allow business owners, as long as they assert their religious beliefs, to deny service to gay and lesbian customers. She apparently gave in to the tremendous pressure placed on her by Delta Airlines, The Super Bowl Host Committee and Major League Baseball and other business leaders. They want no part of what they would describe as an Arizona unfriendly to business. Those pressures and positions are not unique to Arizona.

As most of us know, during Indiana's current legislative session there was abundant debate about HJR 3, known as the Marriage Protection Amendment. The goal of that amendment was to ban gay marriage and civil unions in Indiana. Unfortunately the wording was softened from the original version passed by our state legislators in 2011 so it will be have to come up again in 2016 for a second vote. Then, if passed, the amendment will be placed on a ballot referendum in the Fall of 2016 for the citizens of Indiana to decide.

What strikes me as interesting is the way in which business and financial interests seem to influence the gay marriage debate. The arguments go something like this. If you ban gay marriage in our state we will lose business. If we lose business we lose money and tax revenues. If we lose money and tax revenues we will not be a favorable state for business development.

My question is this. When did we decide to make the god of greed and financial success the final arbiter of what's important? Proverbs 15:16 warns, "Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil with it." In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus proclaimed,

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth." No individual or state or nation should be so eager to be "rich" and "successful" and "reputable" that it falls prey to the temptations and snares that will move it toward the ruin and destruction of godlessness? (See I Timothy 6:9).

For many, mammon matters. For many citizens and politicians of our state it seems like the bottom line is the bottom line. It isn't. May God give us the courage to follow His Word rather than focusing on our wallets.

Looking Up,  
Pastor Chuck Circle