

5 September 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

RE: Grace Churches International Endorsed Chaplains Guidelines in Response to the 26 June 2013 Supreme Court Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)

To Whom It May Concern:

In response to the 26 June 2013 Supreme Court ruling that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which states "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife" is unconstitutional, and the resultant Department of Defense policy changes to extend benefits to same-sex domestic partners as spouses, the following guidelines clarify the longstanding ministry expectations for all chaplains endorsed by Grace Churches International:

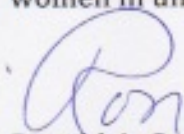
- 1) All ministries regarding human sexuality will reflect the historic, natural and Biblical view of marriage as the uniting of one man and one woman in a covenantal relationship for life.
- 2) Scripture condemns as sin all forms of sexual immorality including adultery, pornography, bestiality, and homosexuality. Such practices violate Biblical standards for sexual purity and are destructive to healthy marital relations and Christian order and discipline. We will provide pastoral care that provides opportunities for repentance and forgiveness, help and healing, and restoration through the mercy and grace of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His demonstration of love for sinners by His death on the cross.
- 3) As we have always done and in striving to be in harmony with Scripture, Grace Churches International endorsed chaplains will not conduct or attend a wedding ceremony for any same-sex couple, bless a union or perform counseling in support of such a union, assist or support paid contractors or volunteers leading same-sex relational events, nor offer any kind of relationship training or retreat, on or off of a military installation, that would give the appearance of accepting the homosexual lifestyle or other sexual wrong doing. This Biblical prohibition remains in effect irrespective of any civil law authorizing same-sex marriage or benefits to the contrary.
- 4) As part of a chaplain's responsibility to provide when we cannot perform, GCI chaplains can refer Service Members to others who can perform same

sex ceremonies or unions. The prohibition from attending such ceremonies/unions still applies.

- 5) Grace Churches International chaplains will lead or participate in worship services conducted on military installations or other locations designated for worship. However, Grace Churches International chaplains will not conduct services jointly with a chaplain, contractor or volunteer who personally practices or affirms a sinful lifestyle in contradiction to Scripture including but not limited to affirming a homosexual lifestyle or such other conduct forbidden by Scripture.
- 6) All military chaplains are endorsed to ensure the free exercise of religion for all military personnel according to DoD 1304.28, par. 6.1.2. You remain protected under DoD policy and applicable federal law to preach, teach and counsel in accordance with the tenants of your faith and conscience. Therefore, as a Grace Churches International endorsed chaplain you will:
 - a. Provide sound Biblical pastoral care for all service members and their families.
 - b. Conduct religious support and pastoral care in accordance to the guidelines contained in this document.
 - c. Treat all service members regardless of rank or behavior with Christ-centered dignity, honor and respect while assisting the institutional leadership in its religious mission requirements and responsibilities as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for additional guidance for your specific ministries or if you experience undue prejudice or harm as a result of following these guidelines.

Know that you remain in our prayers. I believe God has anointed you to serve at such a time as this. May the Lord richly bless you for all you do for our men and women in uniform and their families.



Ronald A. Crews
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Endorsing Agent