

Franklin Graham Warns of Christian Persecution After Pastor Convicted for Preaching John 3:16

Franklin Graham is speaking out after a retired pastor in Northern Ireland was convicted for publicly preaching John 3:16 near an abortion facility, a case that is rapidly becoming a flashpoint in the growing debate over religious liberty and free speech.

According to reporting from JubileeCast, 78-year-old retired pastor Clive Johnston was convicted under Northern Ireland's abortion "safe access zone" law after delivering an open-air sermon outside Causeway Hospital in July 2024.

The article reported that authorities alleged Johnston violated restrictions prohibiting actions perceived as influencing those seeking abortion services. Multiple reports, including coverage from Decision Magazine, stated that Johnston's message centered on the Gospel and John 3:16 and did not explicitly mention abortion.

Johnston was later fined approximately £450 after reportedly refusing police requests to move his sermon outside the designated zone, according to reports.

The case has sparked concern among Christians and free speech advocates who warn the ruling could represent a growing restriction on public expressions of faith.



To order Sean Feucht's new book, No Turning Back, visit .

Graham addressed the conviction in a public social media

statement highlighted by JubileeCast.

“God bless Pastor Clive Johnston for preaching the Gospel—John 3:16. Pray for this 78-year-old retired pastor and his legal team as he was convicted and fined for preaching in a “safe access zone” outside a hospital in Northern Ireland where abortions are performed. Pastor Johnston didn’t even mention abortion; he just preached the Gospel in a public space. I hope his legal team at @ChristianOrgUK will have success in appealing this. Religious freedoms are being threatened not only in the UK, but here in the US, Canada, and around the world.

I’ve had the privilege of serving on President Trump’s Religious Liberty Commission, and we’ve heard testimonies from a broad spectrum of people whose religious liberties have been violated, and their lives and livelihoods have been greatly impacted. There is an anti-Christ spirit that is prevailing in our world today. It’s as though every demon in Hell has been unleashed.

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– Franklin Graham (@Franklin_Graham) May 8, 2026

The conviction of Johnston arrives amid increasing hostility toward biblical beliefs in public life in Western nations. Scripture repeatedly warns that followers of Christ would face resistance for preaching the Gospel. And as public expressions of faith face mounting scrutiny in various parts of the world, it has become clear that this is the time for the Church to

stand firm with both conviction and courage in an increasingly hostile culture.

Abby Trivett is a writer and editor for Charisma Media and has a passion for sharing the gospel through the written word. She holds two degrees from Regent University, a B.A. in Communication with a concentration in Journalism and a Master of Arts in Journalism. She is the author of the upcoming book, *The Power of Suddenly: Discover How God Can Change Everything in a Moment*. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.