

Pastor Arrested for Preaching Against Homosexuality

Pastor David Lynn of Christ Forgiveness Ministries was arrested on June 4, 2019, for preaching the gospel publicly in Toronto, Canada. The neighborhood he was preaching in was Church-Wellesley Village. This neighborhood is known to be a place where many of the LGBTQ community in Toronto reside. His ministry is currently on an outdoor preaching tour throughout the 22 districts of Toronto. June 4, happened to be the day they scheduled for that district.

It is not uncommon for someone to think “open-air preaching” and “LGBTQ neighborhood” and immediately jump to thoughts of preachers condemning homosexuals to hell. However, Pastor Lynn’s preaching was some of the most loving and gracious preaching I have ever seen and heard, which is why it is outrageous that he was arrested.

The entire time of preaching was livestreamed via Facebook and can be found on YouTube. Throughout the video, it is surprising to see the reaction of those who were listening to Lynn’s preaching. The more love he poured out, the more hate and resistance he received. As anyone can see if they view the video, Pastor Lynn was respectful and kind throughout all of his time preaching. As he shared the gospel, he also made statements like “We are here to tell you that we hate nobody.” He emphasized God’s love again and again.

He proceeded to ask those protesting him if they would be willing to tolerate him as a Christian. But those listening were unwilling to dialogue, and many asked him to leave the street corner.

Throughout the encounter, he was very calm and collected, not entering into any disrespectful or condemnatory dialogue.

Canada does have hate-speech laws. However, there is no way Lynn's preaching could be deemed as hate speech. He stated while preaching, "Everyone is accepted. ... and that is what we preach as Christians."

In order to not make anyone listening feel singled out, he said "Jesus died for the sinner. ... Every heterosexual has sin. Every homosexual has sin. Sin is when we violate the laws of God." He did not target any particular group of people or single out homosexuality.

Though he was very loving throughout the entire encounter, tensions escalated, and people began to form a mob of protest around him. As he tried to walk away from the most adamant protesters, they crowded in on him and would not let him move. Throughout the encounter, as he tried to walk away from them, they pressed in on him and blocked him. At times, they even pressed their bodies against him, which in technicality is assault.

When the police arrived, rather than dealing with those who were assaulting Pastor Lynn, the police blamed him for creating a disturbance of peace. Even upon his request to deal with those who had assaulted him, the police would not listen to him.

Pastor Lynn, preaches on a weekly basis all throughout Toronto with amplification and, according to his statements, he has never been in violation of the law by using amplification. In the video that captured the entirety of the event, the officers told him that he needed to preach without amplification. They said this despite him not being in any violation of the law. He then proceeded to preach without amplification, but not long after, the officers decided to arrest him.

Later that evening, in a statement to the media, he said, "Every community in Toronto should have the same laws, and

everyone should be welcome." He continued, "Everyone should have rights, dignity and respect, just like Christians should as well."

He clarified that throughout his preaching, he was telling those listening, "God loves you. There is hope for you." "Whatever community you are, God loves you. Jesus died for you."

We must understand the importance of this event. It is a gross violation against free speech, and it shows any Christian a precursor of what persecution could look like in the future.

Here in North America, we are in a serious battle for rights that we have taken for granted. There are groups, organizations and individuals that want to make certain types of free speech illegal. Pastor Lynn's arrest is nothing short of a violation of his right to free speech. He was not inciting anyone to violence, and neither was he being defamatory. He was preaching the gospel. He was preaching that Jesus Christ loves each person and died specifically for them. In spite of this, he received harsh protest which ended in his arrest. This should greatly concern any Christian.

Pastor David Lynn was arrested for a message of love, healing and hope. As Christians we need to take this as a wake-up call. Our rights and liberties are on the brink of being removed in the coming years. Now is the time to have a voice. We cannot afford to remain silent.

The growing trend in North America is that if anyone shares publicly on a topic that is deemed controversial, or that a particular group deems hateful, they must be silenced. What will happen the day that the simple gospel is considered hate speech? That is where things are headed if we as Christians do not take a stand today. We already seen certain people and topics being censored by Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We cannot be idle. We must stand for liberty. The future of our

right to free speech begins today. If we wait to deal with it, it will likely have already been taken away.

David Hoffman is an evangelist and the director of Kingdom Enterprises, an outreach and evangelism ministry in Tucson, Arizona. His passions are to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ, ignite a passion for evangelism within the lives of believers and help equip them to live Spirit-filled and Spirit-empowered lives. For more information or to contact him, please go to HisKingdomEnterprises.com or .