

Controversial Pastor's 'Warriors for Christ' Facing Massive Legal Battle

An outspoken West Virginia pastor who has openly criticized the LGBT movement with his ministry "Warriors for Christ" is now facing another battle after Facebook shut down the ministry's page for what it calls "hate speech."

The ministry, which opposes homosexuality and abortion, had more than 225,000 followers on its Facebook page. The social media giant claims the page violated the site's community standards policy and promoted hate speech.

However, Pastor Rich Penkoski told the Conservative Firing Line that Facebook ignored death threats made against him through the page. The threats came as a result of his vow to ban anyone who posted a rainbow flag emoji on the ministry's Facebook page. Penkoski said his mailbox, inbox and even phone messages were inundated with threatening messages.

As CBN News reported, the threats grew so severe last summer that local law enforcement officials advised Penkoski to move his family for safety concerns after receiving feces in the mail and X-rated material sent to his home.

After the threats, the ministry decided to start Social Cross, their own alternative social media site for Christians.

In a press release posted on Tuesday to his personal Social Cross page, Penkoski informed his followers, instead of petitioning Facebook to put his page back up again, he and four others are now petitioning the Federal Court in the Northern District of West Virginia to enjoin the governor and attorney general from legally respecting, endorsing and recognizing gay marriage or any statute that asserts that

sexual orientation is a civil rights matter.

The case is captioned Penkoski v. Justice.

During a Facebook Live broadcast, Monday night, Facebook pulled the live feed from his second Facebook page. Penkoski also posted the video to his YouTube page, in which he spoke about the ministry's problems with Facebook and why he decided to file the lawsuit.

In the video, the pastor said, "a lawsuit against Facebook is next."

"We have to continue to fight this. We have no choice. I hear people all of the time as Christians saying, 'I'm reaching people through Facebook.' Are you? We see time and time again of Facebook banning and removing Christian pages for daring to challenge homo-fascism and LGBT communities," Penkoski said in the video. "For daring to say that it is a sin. For daring to say that two men and two women together is not natural, it is not the way God created things."

At the time Facebook unpublished his page, Penkoski told the Conservative Firing Line they were counseling a young woman who was thinking about committing suicide. With the removal of the page, the ministry lost contact with the woman, and they do not know what happened to her.

Facebook also personally banned the pastor from its social site for 30 days for publishing an image of a winged angel wearing armor and holding a sword and a shield.

The ministry has set up a petition on , not to bring back the ministry's page, but to tell the social media giant "to stop banning and censoring Christian conservatives, because of activists who wish to silence the opposition."

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