

The Church Must Build Its Relationship With Law Enforcement, Pastor Caleb Cooper Says

A pastor, charged by God to “keep your lighthouse open” despite COVID-19 restrictions.

A sheriff, charged by his oath of office to enforce the law.

A recipe for conflict? In many cases, yes. But as Pastor Caleb Cooper tells host Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of the *Greenelines* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, this situation catapulted him into a strong relationship with his local sheriff—and later propelled him into the writing of a new book, *The Call for Strong Godly Leadership: A Compilation of Leaders from the Church, Marketplace and Law Enforcement*.

“We received a voicemail on the phone, and it clearly said that the church is nonessential and must be shut down,” recalls Cooper, pastor of New Hope Revival Church in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. “From that moment, I went straight to the sheriff’s office, knowing that the sheriff is really the last line of defense concerning our constitutional rights.

“I sat down and I said, ‘Sheriff Glenn Hamilton, I’ve watched you fight for the Second Amendment, you and 29 sheriffs in the state,’” Cooper says. “You fought for gun rights; I want to know if you’ll fight for God rights.

“And he looked me right in the eye; he said, ‘Pastor, I will defend your rights to have church, even if that means I have to go to jail,’” Cooper says.

That began a continuing relationship between Cooper and

Hamilton that included Hamilton deputizing members of Cooper's congregation and helping him stand up against New Mexico Gov. Michelle Grisham for the church's right to worship. More recently, it has included Cooper choosing to include chapters from law enforcement officials, including Hamilton, in his new book.

"Give those in blue a voice," Cooper says the Holy Spirit told him as he set out to write the book.

His hope, he says, is to "build or rebuild the relationship between the church and law enforcement today," and he has already gotten the book, with its many contributions from law enforcement officers, into the hands of a number of law enforcement officials. "They're also going to hear godly leadership," Cooper says. And so the hope is we'll build a bridge between the church and law enforcement; we'll labor together."

✖ For much more from Pastor Caleb Cooper on the church, law enforcement and the bond the two share under God, listen to this entire episode of *Greenelines*, and be sure to subscribe to the *Greenelines* podcast on your favorite podcast platform. Check out Cooper's new book, *The Call for Strong Godly Leadership*, wherever fine books are sold, and listen to his podcast, *Uncompromised Revival Fire*, also on the Charisma Podcast Network. {eo2}

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