

Fiery Pentecostal Keeps Preaching Bible Truth Even as Churchgoers Walk Out

One congregation member popped up. Then another. Then another. Each walked out, “kinda shaking their heads,” because Pastor T. L. Bates refused to compromise the Word of God.

The Assemblies of God Pastor was preaching on “Fire Starters,” according to TRUNews, and addressing one of the most hot-button issues facing the Church community today: Homosexuality.

“I used Elijah as the example of a ‘Fire Starter,’ and our need to raise up a new generation of ‘Fire Starters’ who would not be afraid to confront false religions (like Islam) and corrupt culture,” Bates tells *Charisma News*. “Anyone (comedians, LGBT community, media) can say anything negative about Christianity and there are no repercussions for their actions or their words. But as soon as a Christian preaches or speaks against the false religion of Islam or against the agenda of the LGBT community and the transgender movement and their demands for us to make accommodations for and accept their lifestyle and agenda—then we face persecution. We are called intolerant and told that we are not being politically correct.

“I went on to say, ‘We need ‘Fire Starters,’ like Elijah, who will call fire down from heaven to confront the culture and false religions with undeniable, uncompromising truth and without political correctness. It was at this point that I began to see people getting up, walking out, shaking their heads.”

The pastor of OKC Faith Church says about 50-75 people of all ages and races walked out.

Despite ample protests and blame, Bates is one of many who will not ignore biblical teaching.

"We welcome everyone to Faith regardless of your sexual orientation, race or religious beliefs. But we will not change the Gospel or modify our message in any way to accommodate any view or lifestyle that is contrary to the Word of God," Bates said. "My real issue that Sunday was that the LGBT community, which by most measurements constitutes less than 1 percent of American society, is actively pushing their agenda on everyone else, while Christians remain silent. My call for Fire Starters was to raise up a generation of believers who were spiritually on fire (boiling point of passion), who would not be intimidated by false religions or deceptive culture for the sake of political correctness. We have an obligation to God to preach the truth in love—but also to preach the truth without apology."

Bates' message was one of repentance and conviction, congregation member Diana Pulliam says.

"I've watched him transform to preach this end time message, and he's on fire for the Lord. But as soon as his messages became politically incorrect, people began to walk out of the services—right in the middle of his messages," Pulliam says. "Saints, a huge separation is taking place. I agree and am praying fervently that the blinders will come off. And I'm confident that the great shaking to come will jolt many wide awake. Our Lord is merciful in bringing this shaking."

But the pastor faced flak for his message. Someone left an anonymous note on his windshield harassing him for his "intolerance." Others threatened to withhold their tithes. Still others never returned.

Still, Bates holds firm.

"Over almost 40 years of pastoral ministry, I have seen that what one generation is asked to tolerate, the next generation

accepts and the next generation participates. So in my personal opinion, I believe the LGBT community, as well as Islam and many others, have an agenda which no longer wants us to be tolerant of their lifestyle and beliefs, but be accepting and accommodating," Bates says. "The transgender bathroom issue is just the tip of the iceberg. Somewhere we must draw the line and refuse to buy into the call for political correctness or tolerance and acceptance and boldly declare the Word of God without fear of man."

And through his message, Bates urges other believers to stand up for righteousness as well.

"I urge pastors and believers everywhere to stop buying into the culture's message, expectation and demands that we be more tolerant, understanding and accepting of these ungodly lifestyles and false religions, and speak up for what is right," Bates says. "Let this experience simply be another call to prayer for all intercessors—because these situations are just more evidence of the last days in which we live in before the coming of the Lord and the final judgment of God."