

Formerly Gay Pastor Sues Vimeo for Censoring His Videos, Deleting His Account

A formerly gay pastor is suing Vimeo for censoring his church's videos and deleting its account.

According to *Newsweek* and the *New York Post*, Vimeo flagged the videos because they encouraged conversion therapy. But Jim Domen—pastor of Church United in Newport Beach, California—tells Charisma News none of the videos even mention conversion therapy.

“We’re not talking about conversion,” Domen says. “We’re talking about freedom!”

One of the five videos Vimeo flagged was an NBC New York video about Assembly Bill 2934 that California almost put into law. That bill, led by Assemblyman Evan Low, would have outlawed any sexual orientation change efforts, therapy or publications.

“They interviewed Evan Low, and [videotaped] by wife and kids and myself for four days,” Domen says. “And that was one of the videos they called out as ‘conversion therapy.’ ... The irony of it all is I never speak about conversion therapy. I’ve never gone through conversion therapy.”

Other videos that Vimeo marked as inappropriate were testimonies of former homosexuals, including Domen. Domen lived as a gay man from the age of 23 to 28. He says his three-year-long relationship with another man ended when his partner switched bank accounts, pushed him out of the business they owned together and “did multiple devious things.” Domen marveled as God continued to provide for him financially and call him to salvation through Jesus.

Domen is now married with three children and has been seeking to ignite spiritual awakening in California through Church United since its founding in October 2016.

But on Nov. 23, 2018, Domen received an email from Vimeo telling him he had 24 hours to take down his videos because the company was deleting the church's account. He says he panicked when he read the email because the church had uploaded 89 videos at that time, which represented two and a half years of work.

The five videos Vimeo flagged were Domen's testimony, a promotional video for the Freedom March in Los Angeles, NBC New York's report on Assembly Bill 2934, Desert Stream founder Andrew Comiskey's testimony and Luis Ruiz's testimony of surviving the shooting at the Pulse gay nightclub in 2016.

When Domen appealed to Vimeo, saying those videos didn't even mention conversion therapy, he says the company responded by saying they flagged "anything that incites bigotry and hatred or harm to other people." Domen was shocked.

"The only thing the videos did was tell stories of transformation, of how Jesus transformed my life," he says. "I didn't call [homosexuality] out as sin. I didn't call out any LGBT people. It was exclusively just speaking of my own personal story and others like mine."

According to a Church United press release, attorney Nada Higuera sent a letter requesting that Vimeo restore the church's account "on the basis that Domen was censored for his sexual orientation and religious beliefs." Vimeo refused to comply.

Domen is suing Vimeo for \$75,000 for violating his free speech rights.