

Houston Pastor Subpoenas Shows Extremism Already on the Shores of America

Pastors around the country saw an unthinkable scenario play out in America last week—one many never thought they'd see in their lifetime. In a country built on freedom, five pastors in Houston were served subpoenas, and attorneys demanded the submission of sermon notes and conversations with congregation members relating to homosexuality or transgenderism.

Sam Rohrer, a longtime legislator and president of American Pastors Network, says the recent news out of Houston proves there are three distinct extreme movements happening simultaneously in America—all aimed at stripping freedom of religion and freedom of speech from Christians.

"This disturbing news about our fellow pastors in Houston has far-reaching implications," Rohrer said. "I see three sectors of the American culture which, by their own actions, are demonstrating hatred toward God, Christianity, Jesus Christ, religious freedom, morality, decency, the Rule of Law and the Constitution.

"While their intentions and goals are different, the extreme tactics and messaging of Islam, Communism/Marxism/atheism and the well-organized, well-funded homosexual agenda have frightening similarities: all demand agreement with them, or else. This is where political correctness and forsaking God has brought this nation. It's time that all those who would not subscribe to the ideologies of these three groups stand together, or we will hang separately.

"The issue in Houston began last year, when the city elected its first openly lesbian mayor. This spring, Mayor Annise Parker and two City Council members pushed an ordinance that

gave special rights to homosexuals and the transgender individuals. The Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO) allowed men to use women's restrooms and vice versa, all in the name of 'equal rights,'" he added.

"The people of Houston protested and gathered more than 50,000 signatures on a petition opposing the ordinance—well over double the number necessary to put the issue in front of voters. But Parker and the Council threw out the petition, citing irregularities. The mayor and the city are facing a lawsuit over the ordinance, and while fighting it, attorneys subpoenaed five pastors for their sermon notes dealing with homosexuality, gender identity or Parker herself. Last week, Parker admitted that the subpoenas may have been 'overly broad,' but they have yet to be recalled.

"While the issue in this case is homosexuality," Rohrer continued, "the underlying philosophy of thought policing is exactly the same as what we see with Islamic Sharia law. In each case, dissent is not permissible. This is yet another reason Sharia law is incompatible with our U.S. Constitution. Under our Constitution, religious leaders are free to teach against Christianity, but Sharia law would mean pastors would be targeted for preaching Christ. And already, this is happening, as pastors are facing pressure by groups who have their own extreme agendas."

How long will it be, Rohrer asked, before pastors will be quieted about educating their churches on the dangers of the infiltration of Islam and Sharia Law in America? One pastor was already censored in August when his videotaped sermon on ISIS was removed from YouTube and his account was frozen. YouTube has since reversed its ban on Pastor Daniel Ausbun of First Baptist Church in Moreland, Ga., and his account is live again.

Alliance Defending Freedom is helping the Houston pastors, and one of its attorneys, Christina Holcomb, said in a statement

that “political and social commentary is not a crime. It is protected by the First Amendment.”