

Police Incite Public to Film Street Preacher's 'Offensive' Gospel Remarks

Christian Legal Centre client Mike Overd, who has been a street evangelist for more than five years, was asked to attend Taunton police station last week for questioning over six complaints received about his preaching in the British town center.

He says that since a new town center sergeant arrived some months ago, who urged local traders to use mobile phones to video him making potentially "offensive remarks," he has felt harassed.

"The sergeant also gave an interview to BBC Points West and the *Somerset County Gazette*, urging people to film me in order to show that my preaching is offensive. It's clear that this officer is determined to stop me preaching the gospel, which is a terrible attack on freedom of speech," says Mike.

Mike films all of his street preaching and has provided the police with film recordings covering the six occasions that led to the allegations. "I do this to prove I have done nothing wrong. I simply preach Gospel truth. I gave the police two DVDs covering all the events that led to their inquiry."

Overd says he is compelled to preach the good news of the gospel when he sees groups of people gathered together, and he has evangelized in Glasgow, Sheffield, Manchester and currently in Taunton, near where he and his wife now live.

"My preaching is challenging because I tackle sin head on, but I take care not to be offensive, and I use a small amp box hung around my neck so I can be heard but don't have to shout loudly," explains Mike.

Mike feels that a number of the six complaints received were frivolous, with complainants failing to remember what he had said or forgetting when the alleged offensive remarks had taken place.

“I find it extraordinary that the police are trying to make it illegal to preach the gospel in the streets of our country, simply because the gospel at times confronts the sinner,” the evangelist said. “It is also wrong for a police sergeant to incite local traders to seek out video evidence that my preaching causes offense and to go on TV and speak to the press to encourage people to film me for evidence of potentially offensive preaching.”