

She Stood by Her Bible. Finland's Supreme Court Convicted Her Anyway

Finland's Supreme Court has convicted parliamentarian Päivi Räsänen and Lutheran Bishop Juhana Pohjola in a narrow 3-2 decision for a church pamphlet published more than two decades ago, while unanimously acquitting Räsänen for a 2019 tweet that included a Bible verse.

Räsänen, a former Minister of the Interior, medical doctor and grandmother of 12, was found guilty of "making and keeping available to the public a text that insults a group" based on a pamphlet she authored for her church in 2004. The conviction carries criminal fines of several thousand euros and a court order requiring the pamphlet's contents to be removed from public access and destroyed.

The ruling overturns two unanimous acquittals from lower courts. The Supreme Court heard the case in October 2025 after prosecutors appealed for a third time.

BREAKING:

The Finnish Supreme Court just acquitted the Christian Democrat Member of Parliament Päivi Räsänen in the infamous "Bible tweet hate-speech case."

She had been under criminal investigation since 2019 for Twitter post that quoted Bible verses (Romans 1:24–27) and...

– Visegrád 24 (@visegrad24) March 26, 2026

Räsänen responded to the verdict with resolve. "I am shocked

and profoundly disappointed that the court has failed to recognize my basic human right to freedom of expression,” she said. “I stand by the teachings of my Christian faith and will continue to defend my and every person’s right to share their convictions in the public square.”

She also signaled she is not finished fighting. “I am taking legal advice on a possible appeal to the European Court of Human Rights,” Räsänen said. “This is not about my free speech alone, but that of every person in Finland. A positive ruling would help to prevent other innocent people from experiencing the same ordeal for simply sharing their beliefs.”



Order Amanda Grace’s New Book, “Brace For Impact” on !

The court’s own summary of the judgment acknowledged the conduct was “not particularly serious in terms of the nature of the offense” and that the pamphlet “did not contain incitement to violence or comparable threat-like fomenting of hatred.” The conviction hinged on Räsänen resharing the 2004 article on her personal social media pages in 2019 and 2020, after a preliminary investigation had already been launched.

On the Bible verse tweet, in which Räsänen publicly questioned her church leadership’s decision to sponsor a Pride event, the court unanimously found she had not met the threshold for criminal incitement, noting she “justified her opinion by citing a biblical text.”

The case drew global attention after prosecutors cross-examined Räsänen and the Bishop on their theology and attacked core Christian teachings in open court. State prosecutor Anu Mantila argued before the Court of Appeal that “you can cite the Bible, but it is Räsänen’s interpretation and opinion about the Bible verses that are criminal.”

ADF International, which coordinated Räsänen’s legal defense,

condemned the ruling. "Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of democracy," said Paul Coleman, Executive Director of ADF International. "The conviction for a simple church pamphlet published decades ago – before the law under which she has been convicted was even passed – is an outrageous example of state censorship. This decision will create a severe chilling effect for everyone's right to speak freely."

Kristen Waggoner, CEO, President and Chief Counsel of Alliance Defending Freedom, called the ruling a warning for free societies everywhere. "This ruling is a stark reminder that no democracy is immune from the erosion of fundamental freedoms," Waggoner said. "Punishing peaceful expression, especially when it is based on deeply held religious convictions, undermines the very foundation of free societies."

The charge against Räsänen falls under a section of the Finnish criminal code titled "war crimes and crimes against humanity." The third original charge, stemming from a 2019 radio debate, was not appealed by prosecutors and Räsänen's acquittal on that count stands.

ADF International says it will continue backing Räsänen's legal defense as she explores her options at the European Court of Human Rights.

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a background in journalism from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man's Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.