

Street Preacher Arrested for Preaching Homosexuality Is a Sin

A Christian street evangelist was arrested last week on a charge of alleged breach of peace with “homophobic” aggravation after a woman complained that he had spoken about sexual sin.

Tony Miano, a former Los Angeles Deputy Sheriff, was part of a street preaching team holding a weeklong mission in Scotland. He was remanded in custody overnight Wednesday and later released on bail to appear before Dundee Sheriff’s Court on April 22.

Miano was the second of the street pastors to address lunchtime shoppers in Dundee High Street. He talked about the nature of sin—about the different sins that Jesus had come to save people from when a woman began to shout at him. He was preaching about sin in general and when he mentioned sexual sin including adultery, promiscuity and homosexual practice, the woman shouted that her son was gay.

Miano’s colleague, pastor Josh Williamson of the Craigie Reformed Baptist Church in Perth, who was present at the incident explains: “Tony wasn’t focussing just on homosexual practice—it was about all sin. A woman was yelling at him and her friend noticed we were filming the preaching, so she ran up to me and tried to smash my camera.”

He says the first woman then appeared to be calling the police on her mobile just as a council warden came along and said that while we were doing nothing wrong, and had the right to free speech, we should move on.

Miano finished his preaching in a few minutes and as the

street preachers packed up two police officers arrived. At this point Williamson says the women shouted that they would get the preachers arrested.

"The female officer saw we had a camera and lunged for it and then the male policeman grabbed it and threw it in the police van," says Williamson.

He says the male officer interviewed the women and then immediately arrested Miano, but did not question him or explain why he was being arrested.

"After Tony was put in the police van I asked why he was being arrested and was told it was for a breach of the peace and for using homophobic language," Williamson explains.

Miano appeared before the Sheriff's Court on Wednesday, where he pleaded "not guilty." He has been bailed to appear for trial at Dundee Sheriff's Court on April 22 but is free to return to his home in the United States.

Andrea Minichiello Williams, chief executive of the Christian Legal Centre, says the incident raises serious questions about police procedure and understanding of the law in dealing with such incidents.

"This appears to be an overzealous reaction by the police. The incident, adds to the number of arrests of Christian street evangelists for preaching from the Bible. It is indicative of the suppression of the freedom to speak and live out the words of Jesus Christ in public and present the teachings of the Bible," says Andrea.

"At the Christian Legal Centre we are committed to helping people to continue to preach the gospel in our nation."

Miano was arrested in July last year, in London, for alleged "homophobic" comments. The case was dropped.