

Street Preacher Vindicated After Wrongful Arrest While Preaching the Gospel

A Christian street preacher has been paid £4,000 plus costs from Cumbria Police in settlement after pursuing a claim for being wrongfully arrested and detained for six hours.

The Christian Institute supported Dale Mcalpine and said the result was a positive outcome “for Christians across the country.”

Mcalpine says he hopes his case will encourage others: “As long as you are reasonable in your preaching you should have nothing to fear from the police.”

Limbo

The preacher, from Workington, Cumbria, was approached by three police officers in Kendal town centre in July 2018.

They arrested Dale and he was taken to Kendal Police Station, where he was held for questioning.

After being released without bail he was left in limbo for six months until the police eventually notified him that he would not be prosecuted.

The Christian Institute supported Dale in a claim against Cumbria Police for wrongful arrest and false imprisonment. Cumbria opted to settle his claim without going to court.

Message of Salvation

Mcalpine has been a street preacher for nearly 15 years.

“I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and His message of salvation and I want everyone to hear about it,” Mcalpine

said. "I took this legal action to help the police realise you cannot arrest people just for preaching the gospel. This is a free country and I'm grateful for our freedoms. I'm also extremely grateful to The Christian Institute for helping me take a stand. I couldn't have done it without them."

'Nothing Wrong'

Simon Calvert, deputy director for public affairs at The Christian Institute, welcomed the news.

"This is a positive outcome, not just for Dale, but for Christians across the country," Calvert said. "It's a reminder that there is no law against preaching the gospel. Our country has a rich heritage of free speech, for preachers and for everybody else."

Mcalpine said he had decided to donate the £4,000 to The Christian Institute, "so they can continue to help Christians to fight for religious liberty."

Intervention

In 2010 Dale was involved in a similar case in which he was arrested and detained for almost eight hours after preaching in Workington town centre.

On that occasion he was awarded £7,000 plus costs from Cumbria Police following a claim of wrongful arrest, unlawful imprisonment and breach of his human rights.

More recently the preacher was involved with a group of street preachers in Bath, who were unlawfully dispersed by Avon and Somerset Police in 2018.

The Christian Institute intervened again and the police changed their approach, defending freedom of speech for those sharing the gospel.

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