

Owners of Christian Pizzeria Go Into Hiding After Left Wing Persecution

A year ago the U.S. looked across the ocean to the Middle East and watched in horror as Christian businesses, churches and people were targeted by radical Muslims. Their homes and property were marked to identify them. Many were burned. Christians were brought out into the streets to be shot, hung, set on fire and crucified. Outrage was the appropriate response.

Our national values hold that individuals must not be persecuted because of their beliefs. Thank God for a land where we are free to live our lives without fear of being targeted for our faith.

Apparently not if you live in Walkerton, Indiana. There Alyssa Marina, a reporter for a local ABC station was sent out looking for a Christian business they could target for a story. What she found was a small town pizzeria named Memories, owned and operated by Frank O'Conner.

There was no doubting the faith of the owners. The pizza joint is decorated with a lot of Christian decor and Scriptures. The news crew made sure they focused on that fact with all their b-roll footage.

O'Conner told *The Blaze* that they were contacted by the station for reaction to the current RFRA legislation. He asked why pick them. They responded that Memories simply came up in a Google search. I have to wonder if it was truly that innocent.

During the interview the reporter asks the owner's daughter a hypothetical question. The same hypothetical question the

media has been using to bait religious conservatives in recent days. "If a gay couple asked you to cater their wedding, would you accept?" Seems like a reasonable question—right? After all how many pizzas have you seen at the weddings you've attended?

The daughter answered the hypothetical question exactly as the reporters had hoped. They would decline. For the record, O'Conner has stated that they've never been asked to cater any event and have never refused service to anyone. Apparently those little details don't matter.

ABC had their story. Now they were free to position the news piece as a case of discrimination and proof of just how the Religious Freedoms bill would hurt same-sex couples.

I wonder did the ABC station expect what would happen next? Did they consider what their three-minute clip might do to a Christian family and their 10-year-old business? Intentionally or unintentionally they practically marked the business and then sat back to watch it burn.

Within hours the threats and hatred began to pour in. So much that the O'Connors were forced to shut down their store. One example of this made national attention when an assistant softball coach from neighboring Concord sent the following tweet: "Who's going to Walkerton, IN to burn down #memoriespizza w me? Agree with #FreedomofReligion bill? "That's a lifestyle they CHOOSE" Ignorant." Thankfully she was immediately suspended.

Let me be clear. The persecution of this Christian pizzeria does not compare to the horrific inhumane treatment of Christians in the Middle East. However all persecution is rooted in the same ignorance and hatred.

The media has been playing in hypotheticals concerning the Religious Freedoms Restoration Act. Now they have a genuine case to consider. Though the target of the discrimination here isn't what they hoped for. It's a Christian family and the

media is ultimately responsible for targeting them.

Now the family says they have been in hiding. They don't know if they will ever be able to reopen. Why? They exercised their right to free speech and their religion. Wow. The very thing the RFRA was signed into the law to protect.

America we are better than this.

Frank O'Conner as soon as you reopen I've got an order coming your way for a large pizza with all the works. Not because I agree or disagree with you but because we are fellow Americans. I don't appreciate the way your family has been treated. Straight or gay, religious or atheist, left or right; all are still precious in His sight. We all deserve love and respect.

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