

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ANDY CORKILL

Hello,

It has come to my attention that this bill is looking to be passed very quickly (24th July) and it raises some concerns.

The same bill passed in England and Wales, contained legal safeguards in their specific wording. They state that if particular behaviours are "intended" to stir up hatred this is a crime, whereas the Scottish bill is just "likely" to stir up hatred. The wording alone leaves this bill wide open to interpretation.

As a Bible believing Christian there are verses that I could read allowed and, under this new bill, if someone hears they could say they are offended. I agree that hatred towards any person is unacceptable but it isn't a matter of being upset but intent. A Christian doesn't share these verses with someone out of hatred but love. I too was once living for myself and my sin, but Christ died so that I might be freed from them and have life with him.

I cannot share that message with a stranger or friend, under this new bill, as they're 'likely' to be upset, hearing God says what they're living for is wrong. The message of the gospel is offensive because it tells us that we're not God, but God is. It's like me reminding my son that he isn't the boss mummy and daddy are, so he needs to listen to us and stop the thing which is bad for him or will hurt him. That same warning and reminder to my son is said with love, not hatred.

Therefore please can you rethink the wording of this bill and place safeguards within it, so that in the coming months Christians sharing the good news about Jesus may not find themselves needlessly arrested.

Our church family and I continue to pray for our leaders as they govern us.

Warm regards,

Andy Corkill
21 July 2020