

JUSTICE COMMITTEE

HATE CRIME AND PUBLIC ORDER (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM JOHN E. MILLER

Sirs

You have called for views on the merits of Part 2 of this Bill, with reference to a new offence of stirring up hatred, and in this email I hereby respond to your invitation. I do so based on my own Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That faith is founded on the clear teaching of the Holy Bible which I regard as the inerrant, eternal word of the one true and living God.

I understand that many, sadly more than likely the majority of Scotland's citizens would not agree with my Christian beliefs and of course that is their right. I do not hold any hatred in my heart of them, nor do I wish them any harm. The exclusivity of my faith, eternal salvation in Christ alone, by faith alone and belief in the teachings of God's inerrant word, The Holy Bible, presents no threat or danger to any one else. I preach from the Bible from time to time at my chosen church fellowship (www.mustardseedchristianfellowship.com) and all our meetings, except one annual business meeting are open to the public.

If you were to ridicule my faith or my expression of it in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I would not consider that as a cause for you to personally hate or fear me. I understand that the majority of Members of the Scottish Parliament probably disagree with my faith. I do not hate them or personally fear them. I fear the damage that their legislative programme is doing in that it is undermining the inerrancy of the book whose writings I believe reveal God's only plan of salvation for all mankind, and incidentally I include women in that generic description of the race.

The Bible teaches that the very kernel of the Christian Gospel, what we read in the New Testament Book of 1 Corinthians 1:23 , "the word of the cross", the preaching of a crucified Saviour is an offence to the religious self righteous person and merely a foolish story to the academic person. In other words my faith may well be offensive to some and ridiculous to others. I fully accept that. When the overwhelming majority of the human race believed that our planet was a flat disc , the notion of a spherical earth was both offensive and ridiculous. Remarkably the Bible confirms that truth.

There are other religions and philosophies with writings which they consider holy and I accept that they with atheists would find no merit or saving truth in my Holy Bible. I understand that and would reciprocate their rejection of God's word in a clear and unambiguous dismissal of the particular writings of their veneration. Do I hate them? I cannot do so because hatred of my fellow man is forbidden in the Bible. What is taught is hatred of sin, because the sin of man put Christ on the Cross. I hate everything the Bible teaches as sin, but I do not hate sinners of any description because I share their culpability, but by the grace of God I am a forgiven sinner and am on God's side in desiring that all should be saved (2 Peter 3:9). The Gospel in which I believe and which I preach is the very opposite of hate. It tells you that God

loves you and Jesus died for you. You have the opportunity to believe it or reject it. My belief that rejection will result in God's judgement is based on love for your soul and a desire for your salvation, not hatred and a desire for your destruction.

Every man or woman has the right to challenge my beliefs based on God's word, and disagree with them. What they cannot be allowed to do is refuse my right to hold these beliefs and and seek to convince others as long as they do not include an incitement or encouragement to violence against the person or hatred of that person. That is categorically forbidden in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 6:27-37). Christianity is the most persecuted faith around the world and I believe that your proposals will, if passed into Scots Law hasten the day when being a Bible believing Christian in Scotland, once "the land of the Book" will become a punishable offence. I would remind you that in Edinburgh where our Parliament is sited men have perished by being tortured and burned at the stake in defense of their faith.

I call to my witness the word of God and am willing to stand before any committee or tribunal in person and give a defense of my faith.

Yours faithfully
John E. Miller

John E. Miller
10 July 2020