

Rough arrest of a pastor preaching marriage as between men and women

Cops arrest, get rough with Christian pastor, 71, in London. He said he merely defined marriage as between men and women; complaint was for homophobia.

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Police in London arrested a 71-year-old Christian pastor for preaching "allegedly homophobic comments" — but John Sherwood said he merely defined marriage as between men and women, the [Daily Mail reported](#).

What are the details?

The outlet said video shows Sherwood standing on a stepladder Friday with a Bible in his hand outside a subway station in Uxbridge, west London. Officers can be heard telling Sherwood, a married grandfather, to get off the stepladder, the Daily Mail reported. But he refused, the outlet said, so the officers grasp his arms and pull him off the stepladder.

Onlookers can be heard shouting, "He's an elderly man; take it easy with him!" the Daily Mail said. At one point, Sherwood wrests his left arm free — and the officer forcefully grabs it again, as a minor struggle ensues between the elderly man and the officers. The officers then struggle to cuff him, as one tells him, "I don't want you getting hurt," the outlet reported. Sherwood is then handcuffed and led to a police car, the Daily Mail said.

OK, so who was actually doing the preaching?

Sherwood said officers grilled him over his attitude toward gay people and even asked him what he would do if his children were gay, the outlet said. Sherwood told the Daily Mail that "the question was irrelevant to the allegation against me. I said I would seek to bring them to Christ, but of course I would love them no matter what, because they're my children." - The outlet said Sherwood was questioned in a police station, held overnight, and released without charge — although a file was passed to the Crown Prosecution Service for review. He added to the Daily Mail that he was bruised after police pulled him from the stepladder and cuffed his hands behind his back.

What did police have to say?

The Metropolitan Police said a member of the public flagged down patrol officers and alleged that Sherwood had made homophobic comments, the outlet said. Police then arrested him under the Public Order Act, which the Daily Mail said "can be used under the vague proviso that someone is using 'abusive or insulting words' that cause 'harm' to someone else." A police spokesman told the outlet that

the directorate of professional standards reviewed video of the arrest and had found no evidence of officer misconduct.

What else did the pastor have to say?

"I wasn't making any homophobic comments," Sherwood — a pastor for 35 years who heads up an independent evangelical congregation — told the Daily Mail. "I was just defining marriage as a relationship between a man and a woman. I was only saying what the Bible says. I wasn't wanting to hurt anyone or cause offense. I was doing what my job description says, which is to preach the gospel in open air as well as in a church building. When the police approached me, I explained that I was exercising my religious liberty and my conscience. I was forcibly pulled down from the steps and suffered some injury to my wrist and to my elbow. I do believe I was treated shamefully. It should never have happened."

The outlet said a Christian Facebook page that Sherwood's supporters read noted the following: "Whilst he was preaching, he expounded the final verses of Genesis 1, declaring that God's purpose in creating mankind was to set human beings in families, headed by a father and a mother, not by two fathers, or by two mothers. The distinction within mankind of just two genders, male and female, made in the image of God, constitutes the essence of God's created order."

The Daily Mail said Peter Simpson — minister of Penn Free Methodist Church in Buckinghamshire who was preaching with Sherwood before the arrest — defended the content of Sherwood's message :

Everything he said was Bible based. He was not saying anything abusive; he is a Christian minister. There did not seem to be any recognition from the police that Christian ministers and such views exist. If there was a Pride parade in Uxbridge, the police would support it even if Christians were offended. You don't have to be an evangelical Christian to be shocked by this. Anyone who cares about liberty should be concerned about what happened in Uxbridge. This is about defending our Christian civilization, or what is left of it. The belief in Genesis 1:27 is fundamental to Christian belief. This arrest of a faithful minister for doing nothing other than declaring what the Bible teaches about one of the important moral issues of our time reveals a dangerous assault upon freedom of speech and, not least, upon the freedom of Christian pastors to declare in public all that the Bible teaches. The State has no right to designate that some parts of God's word are no-go areas. Whatever one's personal views on homosexuality might be, it is surely pertinent to ask what kind of nation have we become that the minister of a Christian church is arrested for upholding in the public square the very truths which Her Majesty the Queen promised to uphold in her Coronation Oath in 1953, with a Bible in her hand?

Source :

<https://www.theblaze.com/news/cops-arrest-pastor-marriage-homophobia>