
GOD'S WORD GATHERING GOD'S PEOPLE FOR GOD'S GLORY

December 6, 2020
The Board of Elders
Calvary Grace Church in Calgary
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

To The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights
Re: BILL C-6
An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy)

The federal government's Bill C-6 proposes a ban on conversion therapy. However, in our view as Christian ministers, we perceive that the argument in Bill C-6 lacks clarity and would create confusion for Canadian citizens.

On the one hand, the Bill aims to ban harmful psychosomatic procedures, including medical treatments that are aimed at changing someone's sexual desires. But on the other hand, they seem to include a ban on anyone counselling anybody about any change of lifestyle.

We're sure no politician intends to ban anyone from converting a vote to their campaign, rather than their opponent's.

No Christians that we are aware of would support the use of psychosomatic medical treatments. It is not an approach which Christian teaching advocates. Instead, we claim our conscience rights to publicly persuade every human being of their need to change. We hope to continue persuading people that God's interpretation of their humanity, as created male and female, fits with God's created design. The Savior of all ethnicities calls all of us to be attentive listeners to his relief, comfort and help. If the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart, Jesus offers atonement for the trespasses of the heart.

The Christian message for two millennia, from Palestine to China, and in Canada from sea to sea to sea, has been that the whole world needs to

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convert from its present condition to a different one. Christianity is a persuading, proselytizing faith, though not a coercive one.

So, when governments propose legislation that lacks clarity, we become concerned. Since we are essentially persuaders, we wonder if the legislation could be applied to non-profit ministries like churches or helping professions like counselling clinics. It is reasonable for religious groups like Christians, along with all Canadians, to wonder if a vagueness in legislation will restrict our Charter rights to persuade others freely.

If long-discredited psychological procedures are clearly identified and banned, then Christians will not disagree. But if 'conversion therapy' is broadened to include a ban on 'conversion', then we have a different kind of legislation. It is more akin to "anti-conversion" laws in many of India's states.

Christians hope that the federal government will not permit ambiguity in legislation to lead to the limitation of our Charter right to public religious freedom. Of course, if the federal government intends to limit religious freedom, it would be helpful for faith communities to know this upfront.

In the end, Christians will continue to care for people everywhere from every background. Part of our loving care is to persuade all people-- not just one group--of the love of God who sent Jesus to be a saviour for the world. God's love spans our Canadian calendar from the Christmas manger to Easter's empty tomb.

Since sexual confusion is a product of an inherited corruption which all people without discrimination receive, we appeal to the wisdom of the Standing Committee to preserve our right to persuade Canadians about this happy alternative, by salvation in Christ.

Know that we pray for our Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and our federal government publicly on most Sundays during our worship gatherings.

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We appeal to you to reconsider the crafting of this legislation, to protect the religious freedom of Canadians. If you do so, you will be used as a means to fulfill the wish of our nation's anthem, "God, keep our land."

Faithfully, before the Triune God,

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