

Lecturer sacked from Bible college for saying 'homosexuality is invading the Church'

 freespeechunion.org/lecturer-sacked-from-bible-college-for-saying-homosexuality-is-invading-the-church

BY Frederick Attenborough



A Christian lecturer sacked from a Methodist college after tweeting his religious beliefs about homosexuality triggered complaints from students who said his online posts made them feel “unsafe”, an employment tribunal has heard (*Christian Today*, *GB News*, *Telegraph*).

Dr Aaron Edwards lost his job at Cliff College, a Methodist learning institution in Derbyshire, following a series of social media posts shared in February 2023. One stated: “Homosexuality is invading the Church. Evangelicals no longer see the severity of this b/c they’re busy apologising for their apparently barbaric homophobia, whether or not it’s true.

“This *is* a ‘Gospel issue’, by the way. If sin is no longer sin, we no longer need a Saviour.”

In another post, he said, “That *is* the conservative view. The acceptance of homosexuality as ‘not sinful’ *is* an invasion upon the Church, doctrinally. This is not controversial. The acceptance is controversial. Most of the global Church would agree. It is not homophobic to declare homosexuality sinful.”

The 39-year-old evangelical Christian and father-of-six was dismissed the following month after he was accused of homophobia and allegedly bringing the college “into disrepute”. College bosses suspended him and fired him after an investigation.

Dr Edwards is now bringing a claim against Cliff College at the Employment Tribunal claiming harassment, discrimination and unfair dismissal. He is seeking damages and compensation for unfair dismissal, and reinstatement.

During his tribunal this week, he told the court that the tweet about “homosexuality invading the Church” was consistent with views he had expressed in blogs, podcasts and sermons he gave as a preacher. He added that the college, where he had worked for seven years, was aware of these views, too.

A decision to ban a Christian teacher after he misgendered a pupil featured an "unjustified interference" with his rights to free speech, and relied upon the recommendation of a regulator with an "extreme ideological" position, the High Court has been told. <https://t.co/i6Ad29jWZD>

— The Free Speech Union (@SpeechUnion) [May 3, 2024](#)

Dr Edwards said that he had been informed last week that three young female students had complained they felt “unsafe” at the college because of his tweet. He told the court that they already had histories of self-harm, and had “complex needs”.

The tweet had been sent, Dr Edwards told the hearing, because at the time the Church of England was debating whether it should allow same-sex blessings in their churches. He said that, as a theology lecturer with a strong understanding of the wider implications of these issues, he posted the message on social media. He said it “escalated significantly”, with 25,000 views and many negative comments.

He said he had made the statement to “stand up for truth when it is being eroded in society,” adding: “Christians are called to profess what they believe.”

The court also heard how the college offered no public support against the social media backlash and effectively sided with those harassing and slandering Dr Edwards as homophobic and hateful.

“My views on homosexuality have not been unknown, they have been discussed openly. In seven years of teaching at Cliff, I have never had a student who took one of my units raise concerns about feeling unsafe in the classroom, and no student has ever left feedback showing concerns about the expression of my views on homosexuality,” he told the tribunal.

Christian Liberal Democrats feared that they would be expelled from the party in a “night of the long knives” after former BBC journalist David Campanale was interrogated over his faith and then deselected as a prospective parliamentary candidate. <https://t.co/FBaJLUiEQx>

— The Free Speech Union (@SpeechUnion) [May 14, 2024](#)

“The College had more than enough opportunity to be familiar with my views and with my academic research for there to be less apparent shock and public disappointment from them in responding as they did on Twitter without any prior consultation with me.

“I believe the public expression of my beliefs is academically defensible, but many institutions will likely be unable to look past the controversy of being dismissed as a result.”

Writing about his termination and subsequent legal action for the *Critic* last year, Dr Edwards said: “Being fired for ‘misconduct’ for causing reputational damage is a difficult line to shake off one’s academic CV. At the time of my suspension and dismissal – as my own reputation was being pilloried even by some who knew me well – I suffered severe physical stress, culminating in cardiac symptoms. This returns occasionally. I still find re-reading the investigation report challenging. All I’d achieved in 7 years at the college – not to mention my entire academic career – appeared to be obliterated in an instant.”

Speaking to *Christian Today* about the case earlier this year, FSU General Secretary Toby Young said: “Expressing orthodox Christian beliefs should not be grounds for dismissal from a purportedly Christian organisation. “Defending free speech means defending the right of people to express views you do not agree with, not just those you agree with.”

[JOIN THE FSU!](#)



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/12y1ZCjqEM4>