

SOUTH AFRICA UPDATE

Dispatches from a Darkening Corner of the Dark Continent

Persecution Increasing in South Africa

by Shaun Willcock

The purpose of these articles is to provide an analysis of the contemporary South African and southern African scene from a Christian, “politically-incorrect” perspective, in order to counter the propaganda of the Reds, almost-Reds (liberals and others), and religious Reds (“liberation theologians”); to warn Christians living in South Africa of real and potential dangers; to encourage Christians elsewhere to pray for the people of this part of the world, especially for their Christian brethren; and to do what they can to assist them.

Christians are to pray for those in authority (1 Tim. 2:1,2), and to obey them in all matters not contrary to the Word of God (Rom. 13:1-7; Acts 5:29). But any danger to believers, whether from a religious or political source, must be brought to the attention of the Church of God (Acts 20:28-31; 2 Thess. 2:1-9; etc.); and this is what we seek to do.

In 1994 South Africa became the world’s youngest Communist-controlled state, when Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress (ANC), in alliance with the South African Communist Party, took power in a fraudulent election. Even prior to that date, when the ANC was carrying out a terrorist campaign against the South African state, it was very clear that under an ANC government Christians could be persecuted; for (as documented in my book, *“Holy War” Against South Africa*,) terrible atrocities were committed against professing Christians throughout the country during that brutal ANC-led terrorist revolution. And once the ANC took power in South Africa, it was just a matter of time before it undertook various legal methods of persecuting professing Christians. Indeed, it lost no time in making its intentions clear, as documented in my article, *Religious Freedom No Longer Exists in South Africa*.¹

In recent years the pressure has increased, and this article will cover some of the latest incidents. Please note that throughout the article we use the term “professing Christians”, for we do not know the people in person and do not know whether or not they are true Christians; and certainly in the case of Charismatic churches and others, we are opposed to many of their teachings and practices. But the fact remains that wherever legislation like this comes into effect, true Christians suffer along with all others who profess to be Christians. It is dangerous to all.

As is happening in such countries as the USA, Canada, the UK, etc., in South Africa Satan is using, in particular, legislative restrictions to persecute professing Christians. It is what can be called “judicial persecution”. The intent is to drastically curtail Christian freedom to believe what the Bible teaches, and to live out its teachings in practice. There are clauses in the South African constitution which have fooled people into thinking that religious freedom is solidly protected by law; but this is in fact not the case at all. As pointed out by Advocate Nadene Badenhorst, legal counsel for Freedom of Religion South Africa, *in practice* religious freedom and church autonomy are being eroded as a result of the “balancing” of these “rights” against other competing “rights”.²

The assault is coming from a number of directions, but the most common tactic being employed is that of the pro-sodomy legislation in South Africa.³ The South African Human Rights Commission (HRC) is at the forefront of this assault on Christianity and defence of sodomy. And by 2014 the HRC was investigating a number of cases against professing Christians for “discriminating against homosexuals”:

The owners of a farm near Wellington, in the Western Cape province, who operate a wedding venue on their farm and who are professing Christians, withdrew permission for a lesbian couple to perform their parody of a “wedding” on the farm. The lesbians lodged a complaint with the HRC, which undertook a probe into the incident. Under pressure from homosexual lobby groups, some suppliers boycotted and withdrew their services from the farm. The wedding venue also received hate mail and threats by correspondence and by phone.

Astounding, is it not, that it is always the professing Christians who are accused of “hate” and “intolerance” – and yet the pro-sodomite crowd are always the ones sending hate-filled messages and making threats! Professing themselves to be “tolerant”, they display their rabid intolerance against all who disagree with them. They demand for themselves what they refuse to give to others.

Eventually the lesbian couple dropped the case. But the HRC stated at the time that “*it is hoping to deal with this kind of discrimination in similar matters on its books*”.⁴

In another case in the Western Cape province, this time in the area of Paarl, another wedding venue owned by professing Christians refused permission to a homosexual couple for a “wedding” there; and the couple then laid a complaint with the HRC. The case was later dropped by the couple.⁵

The owners of a guesthouse in Wolseley, in the Western Cape province, being professing Christians, would not rent out a room in their guesthouse to a sodomite couple in November 2013, which led to them having to face a hearing in the Equality Court in Bellville in April 2014 after the HRC investigated.⁶ The HRC agreed to legally represent the sodomite couple, who asked the court to order the owners of the guesthouse to: 1) unconditionally and sincerely apologise for their conduct; 2) pay a fine to be donated to a non-profit organisation called Pride Shelter Cape Town; and 3) be prevented from discriminating in future.⁷

The owners of a farm in Gauteng province, which is one of the oldest wedding venues in South Africa, were approached to host a “same-sex marriage” (in reality these are *not* marriages in any sense) in the chapel on the farm. The owners, a professing Christian couple, replied that their conscience did not allow them to do so. The chapel belongs to a denomination called the Reformed Evangelical Church of South Africa. A complaint of “unfair discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation” was laid, and in April 2014 the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) notified the farm that it was investigating.⁸

But it was not just guesthouses and wedding venues that were being targeted in this deliberate campaign of intolerance and arrogance on the part of sodomites:

In April 2014 the Cape High Court, sitting as the Equality Court, heard a matter referred by the Human Rights Commission against a minister, O.P. Bougaardt, of Calvary Hope Church in Mitchells Plain, in the Western Cape province. The complaint against him was that he made discriminatory statements regarding homosexuals/homosexuality on social media and in public. He was also accused of hate speech. The HRC asked the court to order Mr Bougaardt to *publicly apologise*, and to pay *R1 million in damages* to institutions working to protect and promote “gay and lesbian rights” in South Africa!⁹

During the initial proceedings the judge held that the two parties should first attempt to resolve the issue outside of court, and therefore postponed the matter for purposes of mediation. To his credit, at the mediation proceedings Mr Bougaardt told the mediator that he could not apologise for what the Bible says regarding homosexuality; and that he would go to jail if need be. He did however apologise if the way in which he communicated his convictions caused offence, and said that he understood this now.¹⁰ We do not know the precise manner in which he communicated his convictions; but if in fact the way in which he did this was correct according to the Scriptures, then he should *not* have apologised even for this.

The result of the mediation was that he did not have to pay damages. It was hailed as a victory for

religious freedom, and it certainly appears that way. Time will tell. Unfortunately it is just one small skirmish that has been won: the battle is still raging, on many other fronts.

Around November 2013 the Office of the Family Advocate in Bloemfontein, Free State province, gave instructions for a complaint to be lodged with the Human Rights Commission against a pastor. He wrote to a Dutch Reformed Church and offered to help with people struggling with the homosexual lifestyle. Incredibly, this church actually reported him to the Office of the Family Advocate!¹¹

Regardless of who this man may be or what he professes to believe, what times we are living in when an institution claiming (in this case, falsely) to be a Christian church would actually report a man for taking a stand against sodomy, which throughout the Bible is condemned as a sin! Some years ago there was the astounding spectacle of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, an evil Marxist dictator, opposing so-called “churches” on the issue of homosexuality. But it was not the “churches” who were condemning homosexuality – it was Mugabe! The “churches” were supporting it. What an upside-down world, when a cruel criminal dictator is the one saying sodomy is against nature, and the “churches” are saying it is a legitimate lifestyle! Are we going to see the same thing in South Africa, with “churches” actually *turning in* a man for taking a stand against sodomy? Evidently yes.

At this point in time it is clear that Satan is using pro-sodomy legislation to attempt to persecute professing Christians. But this is not the only weapon he is using. Those who stand for other biblical truths are under attack as well:

A church in Cape Town, Joshua Generation Church, taught the biblical position on the corporal punishment of children in one of its teaching manuals. A complaint about this teaching was lodged against the church by a husband and wife who were not members of the church, nor did they have any relationship with it. Note that the complaint was solely directed at the church’s teaching about the spanking of children. The complainants never alleged that any incident of actual child abuse had occurred. Furthermore, the spanking of children by parents is at this time still legal in South Africa!¹² But none of this mattered to the HRC. It launched an investigation. It wrote to the church, stating that the complainant alleged that the church’s conduct amounted to a violation of a child’s right to be protected from neglect, abuse and maltreatment. The HRC stated that it regarded corporal punishment as falling within the definition of abuse, maltreatment and neglect.¹³

As part of its investigation, the HRC demanded “clarification” on three things: 1) that the church’s doctrine accepts and requires the use of corporal punishment by means of the rod; 2) that the church implies that corporal punishment does not negatively affect the child; and 3) that the church’s purposeful promotion of corporal punishment is also published in its teaching manuals.¹⁴

The HRC *demand*ed that the church apologise, and refrain from teaching that child discipline by spanking is right.¹⁵ At the time of writing, the outcome of this matter is still pending.

And meanwhile, pressure is mounting to have the corporal punishment of children by their parents made illegal in South Africa.¹⁶ Here is what this will mean for Christian parents in South Africa: “parents who believe that it is their God-given responsibility in terms of the Bible to, at times and where needed but always in love, discipline their children by spanking them, will potentially face criminal prosecution. If found guilty of the crime of spanking, they will be fined or imprisoned even where no child abuse has occurred. A further option in terms of the Bill, is the referral of the child to a social worker for investigation, and the referral of the parent(s) for evaluation and treatment in the form of parenting programmes. Parents who refuse to submit to the liberal ideology of these parenting programmes, may well find their children being removed from them and placed in foster care (as is already happening in Europe).”¹⁷

Lastly, a South African official has stated that churches should be regulated to stop them making unfounded claims and being harmful to the communities they served. In one form or another there have been similar calls made over the years. This time it issued from the mouth of Thoko Mkwazi-

Xaluva, the chairwoman of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities. She said: “They [church leaders] need to be regulated by their own peers because they understand the field better. Right now, I can say I am an archbishop and start selling water and ask people to eat grass and wash it down with petrol. It is free for all. If there was a body to regulate churches, places like that would be forced to close down by their own peers because they know what can be done spiritually and what not.”¹⁸

The purported reason for this plan was because of the wicked deeds of certain Charismatic pastors in recent times. One of them reportedly made members of his congregation eat grass and drink petrol. This of course provides the government – always on the lookout for ways to gain ever more control over the citizens – the excuse it needs to introduce legislation to restrict religious freedom even further. But how easily such a regulative body would be manipulated by the powers that be! There is no true religious freedom where a panel of people have the power to force the closure of religious institutions merely because *they* deem them to be undesirable. This creates a forced uniformity of religion that would be extremely dangerous for all true Christians, who stand against the ecumenical and interfaith movements. In the name of “protecting religious freedom”, such “oversight” bodies would actually *curtail* religious freedom and enforce compliance with what the State deems to be acceptable religious practice.

In a 2013 article¹⁹ we wrote:

How all this reminds one of the story of the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf! Remember that children’s story? The wolf said, “I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house down!” And he blew down two of the houses. But he could not blow down the strong, solidly-built house of the last of the pigs. The State is the wolf, the true Church is the solidly-built house. The State huffs and puffs against the Church – this is what we are seeing today, all over the world. There is a great huffing and puffing against the Church, a satanically-inspired attempt to blow the Lord’s house down, from all kinds of angles. Many “churches” crumble and fall, but these are the ones not built upon Christ the solid Rock (Matt. 7:24-27). These are the ones which say things like, “But if it’s the law then we must accept it!” or, “But it’s just a small, peripheral issue; we don’t need to hold on to it!” The true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ will continue to stand when multitudes of false professing “churches” and “christians” buckle and give in to the State’s huffing and puffing. But make no mistake: the State is powerful and it is determined, and it has declared war on the true Church and the biblical Gospel. Its goal is to blow the Lord’s house down, and it will use every piece of wicked legislation it can create to achieve this goal. Yet Christ the Lord must be obeyed and served, first and foremost.

Truly, the storm clouds are gathering! Christians’ freedoms are being eroded, taken away, even while the freedoms of sexual perverts are now enshrined in law. This is a spiritual war between Christ and Satan. It is the devil masquerading as an angel of light, declaring through his servants that what has always been wrong is now right, and what has always been right is now wrong.

These are dark days, trying times, for the people of God. But the Scriptures are very clear: the complete Gospel of Christ, “all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), is not proclaimed if Christians allow the State to dictate the parameters of what may or may not be proclaimed. And the only answer we can give is that of the apostles, when the authorities “commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (*which includes* teaching what sin is, and teaching how parents ought to act, etc., for this is all part of teaching *all* that Christ has commanded, as being part of preaching the whole Gospel (compare Matt. 28:20 with Mk. 16:15): they replied, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:18-20).

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ENDNOTES:

1. *Religious Freedom No Longer Exists in South Africa!* by Shaun Willcock. Published by Bible Based Ministries: www.biblebasedministries.co.uk.
2. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, June 6, 2014. <http://forsa.org.za>.
3. *Court Orders Church to Apologise to Sodomite*, by Shaun Willcock. Published by Bible Based Ministries: www.biblebasedministries.co.uk.
4. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
5. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
6. *Christian Action*, 2014 Vol. 2. Africa Christian Action, Claremont, Cape Town, South Africa. www.christianaction.org.za.
7. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
8. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
9. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
10. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, August 15, 2014.
11. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
12. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
13. *The Mercury*, September 2, 2013.
14. *The Battle for the Bible*, article in *Joy!* Magazine, October 2014.
15. *Christian Action*, 2014 Vol. 2.
16. See *Spanking of Children to Be Banned – But 12-Year-Olds Given Access to Contraceptives*, and *The State Claiming the Right to Tell Christians What to Teach and Practice*, both by Shaun Willcock. Published by Bible Based Ministries: www.biblebasedministries.co.uk.
17. *Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA)*, May 8, 2014.
18. *The Mercury*, November 10, 2014.
19. *The State Claiming the Right to Tell Christians What to Teach and Practice*, by Shaun Willcock. Published by Bible Based Ministries: www.biblebasedministries.co.uk.

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