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# Mind Your Language

by James McBride

Any public speaker today—in or out of the pulpit—treads on egg-shells. Carefully choosing their words lest some sensitive soul takes offence. Complainants are amply supported by perverse laws and then they run off to claim compensation or to make thuggish comments on the social media.

Clearly all who address the public should boldly present a strong case—but with courtesy and with sensitivity towards their audience. And they should be sure of their facts.

## **Blasphemy**

It's almost a decade since blasphemy law was repealed in the UK, having been in place for four centuries. (Only Ireland has recently introduced such laws.) It has been defined as *'the action or offence of speaking sacrilegiously about God or sacred things; profane talk'*.

'Free speech' (while it lasts!) allows us to express often controversial views—and, for us, permits the proclamation of the Gospel—which increasingly offends the authorities. Recent legislation could lead, indeed has done, to prosecution for expressing Bible teachings.

Such opposition isn't, of course, new. Witness those who sought to speak freely about the Bible in mediaeval times. Or the experience of the apostle Paul beaten almost to death for proclaiming God's Word—and that by religious leaders!

## **The God Factor**

We are each free to decide on our view of the existence or otherwise of a Creator God; though—given that overwhelmingly mankind believes in a deity—a degree of respect from dissenters would be expected.

Those who have concluded that there is no God are branded in the Bible as foolish (Psalm 53:1). It is the mentality that shows ignorance of how God is presented in the Christian Scriptures—certainly not 'utterly evil', not 'totally selfish', not 'quite clearly a maniac', not 'capricious, mean-minded and stupid' as claimed one self-confessed atheist.

We here in the West, are—for now!—free to speak our minds. God in His Word has revealed the path to temporal and spiritual success, the Way that all true Christians embrace, reflecting the mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures. It is far from being 'politically correct' and the law doesn't like it.

The apostle Paul's words to Timothy are appropriate: *'...I urge that petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be offered to God for all people; for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life with all reverence toward God and with proper conduct'* (I Timothy 2:1-2).

We pray for such that they will provide the environment in which we can live that perfect Way of God, as we strive towards being transformed into becoming like Christ.

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