

Money Talks, Money Walks: the Battle for Religious Freedom

Rod Taylor

Leader, CHP Canada

On March 4th, 2015, there will be an exodus of sorts from a Canadian bank near you. It's actually a movement...a movement of money. Known by the catchphrase of Move My Money¹ (hashtag #movemymoney), the purpose of the action on March 4th is to preserve and protect Canadians from corporate discrimination. More specifically, the goal is to discourage corporations from using their financial power to exclude those with a Christian world view from serving as lawyers and judges in Canada. The specific action planned for March 4th is to have as many Canadians and Canadian businesses as possible move their deposits and financial dealings on that day from the Bank of Montreal (BMO).

Why BMO? A brief explanation is in order. Over the past year, BMO has spearheaded efforts to consolidate power against Christian law firms and against the graduates of a future law school currently being proposed by Trinity Western University. BMO announced that they will no longer employ the services of any lawyers or firms who have not openly embraced the notion of "diversity"—that misused euphemism for all sexual orientations other than the tried-and-true marriage of one man and one woman. In other words, in order to embrace "diversity" they will demand narrow uniformity of expression from their employees and those with whom they do business.

Not only has BMO announced its own discriminatory policy; they have gathered together a large number of powerful corporations who have agreed to abide by the same code. Some of the CEOs and boards of these other corporate empires appear to be blissfully ignorant of the true nature of their commitment. They may have thought they were merely agreeing to treat people fairly and to show tolerance to people of diverse backgrounds. What their agreement actually says is that their companies will not employ legal firms which are not dynamically and proactively "diverse."

If they were criticizing or cutting ties with law firms that abuse or discriminate against people of different lifestyles, then public opinion—indeed Christian opinion—would likely support the bank's attempt to use its influence to achieve equal opportunity. But that's not the question. BMO—and the other corporate entities which have aligned themselves with BMO's agenda—have taken action *against* an identifiable group (Christian lawyers) and in so doing are violating the very principles which they claim to be upholding. In fact, they are discriminating against people because of their religious beliefs (a category protected by Section 15 of the Charter) and giving special status to people self-identified by their sexual and behavioural preferences, a category deliberately left out of the Charter when the Constitution was patriated in 1982.

"Woe to them who call evil good and good evil". Rebellious mankind has always resented good people doing good things in a good way. Those who choose to ignore or abandon moral precepts resent other people who do not follow them into sin. That's why people like those who are orchestrating this corporate discrimination against Christian lawyers cannot rest content and allow good lawyers coming from good law schools to practice on an equal footing in Canada. First, it makes them ashamed of their evil deeds. Secondly, by contrast, it exposes their agenda to scrutiny.

After all, a Christian lawyer might actually believe that the "supremacy of God and the rule of law" have some application to justice today and argue accordingly in a court of law. A Christian lawyer might actually believe that the biblical injunctions to abstain from adultery, fornication, and sexual perversion still apply in the 21st Century. A Christian lawyer might actually believe that it is wrong to kill the innocent pre-born or disabled. A Christian lawyer might see the hypocrisy of extending special rights to Muslims that are denied to Christians. A Christian lawyer might

object on moral grounds to the state imposition of sexually-explicit materials into public school classrooms and might not agree that doctors should be granted a Charter right to terminate lives with impunity. A Christian lawyer might believe in absolute truth and absolute right and wrong and that belief might affect the way that he or she argues a case.

In short, Christian lawyers might become a real inconvenience to the legal establishment. They might actually seek justice in the courts rather than clever Charter-based decisions that offend both common sense and decency. And worst of all, Christian lawyers might one day become Christian judges, even Supreme Court justices. What an impediment they could be to the status quo! With the supremacy of God in mind and the established precedent of hundreds of years of Christian jurisprudence, the Supreme Court of Canada might make quite different decisions than the ones we have seen in recent years.

CHP Canada is not telling you what to do with your money or where you should shop or where you should bank. In fact, it is becoming increasingly difficult to do business only with those banks or corporations that share your philosophy. But we do want our members and readers to know that many Christians from a variety of organizations and church backgrounds are taking this opportunity to demonstrate their concern for freedom of religion in Canada. We support TWU in its bid to establish a law school and we believe Canada will benefit by having more lawyers holding to standards of excellence that grow out of firm Christian beliefs and a strong moral code.

We encourage you to learn more about this case by visiting The Institute for Canadian Values webpage on Corporate Discrimination². You can sign the petition to the CEO of BMO here³. Individuals and groups which have rallied to this cause are asking BMO and other corporate entities to stop their campaign against Christian lawyers and against TWU. They are also asking the Government of Canada to create an office in defence of religious freedom in Canada to complement our efforts abroad.

We also want to thank those young people who have decided to pursue a career in law. You are so desperately needed! We thank Robert Kuhn, President of TWU, and all those who have stood firmly with him against corporate and judicial bullying. Isn't it ironic that in this age of endless campaigns against bullying in our schools that we are facing such outrageous bullying from those who claim to care about equality and human rights?

Thank you to each of you, our readers and members. Please forward this article by email, Twitter or Facebook. Christians must stand up to the bullies or our freedoms will be lost. If you're not already a member of CHP Canada⁴, it's time to join⁵!

Footnotes

¹ canadianvalues.ca/ICV/corporatediscrimination/

² canadianvalues.ca/ICV/corporatediscrimination/

³ canadianvalues.ca/ICV/corporatediscrimination/petition/

⁴ www.chp.ca

⁵ www.chp.ca/get-involved