Twitter Thread by Holly | Alem



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@alemiye_

I've been frustrated by the tweets I've seen of this as a Canadian. Because the facts are being misrepresented.

We're not under some sort of major persecution. That's not what this is. A thread. 1/8

> BREAKING: Pastor James Coates of GraceLife Church of Edmonton was just carried off to jail in hand and ankle cuffs. The condition of his release is that he cannot preach. His wife/kids are not allowed to see him.
>
> The 1st Canadian pastor to be jailed for holding a church service pic.twitter.com/AKMPVWgFXw
>
> — Jeremy (on Theology) (@TheologyJeremy) February 17, 2021

This church was fined for breaking health orders in Dec. They continued to break them. So the pastor was arrested and released on conditions of... you guessed it, not breaking health orders. And then they broke the health orders. 2/8

So then he was arrested and told he couldn't hold church services in person if he was to be released. He refused. He's still in custody.

Here is my frustration as a Christian in Canada:

1. They were able to gather, with some conditions. They didn't like those. 3/8

2. He is not actually unable to preach. He is just unable to hold church services because they broke the conditions given by the public health office in Alberta. He says he can't in good conscience do that, so they are keeping him in jail (because he will break the law). 4/8

3. This is the 1st article of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: "guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." 5/8

3a. The freedom of religion and expression CAN be limited when it is justified, LIKE IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC. Was he arrested for what he preached? No! We remain free to preach the Gospel of Jesus loudly! 6/8

3b. This was not an infringement on his rights, from what I can see. Had he followed guidelines, this wouldn't have happened (no one said how many he church services could hold, just how many people at once). We can honour the law AND follow Jesus. 7/8

The Gospel of Jesus is going forth in Canada. This is not persecution of Christians. Not in the least. Had it been any other religion, same thing would have happened. I am so sad for the witness that will be tarnished by this display by Christians in Canada. 8/8

**I will add that I do not rejoice when ministers of the gospel face hardship. This sucks. He's separated from his family. He's away from his flock. And I do hope for a swift resolution. 9/8