

Sacked for Sharing the Hope of Christ

September 3, 2010

[TBC: A Wandsworth, England council worker was fired because he spoke to a client and suggested that she "not give up hope and try putting her faith in God.]

Shock decision against Council worker sacked for mentioning God [Excerpts]

There is widespread shock following the news that Duke Amachree has lost his case, having been sacked for mentioning God in the workplace. An employment tribunal has ruled that it was reasonable for Wandsworth Council to dismiss Duke, after he was sacked for gross misconduct for suggesting to a client with an incurable illness not to give up hope and to try putting her faith in God. The tribunal also found that the Council had not discriminated against Mr Amachree on the basis of his religion. In addition, the tribunal took the view that Duke had breached confidentiality by publicising his case.

The decision has come as a huge surprise to Duke and to his legal team.

Duke, a father of two and committed Christian, had worked for Wandsworth Council for 18 years and had an unblemished record. Yet, as a result of the comments he made in one 45 minute housing interview, he was subject to 6 months of investigations and three interviews with the Council. His solicitor was even told by the Council that saying "God bless" to a client would require an investigation if the client complained.

Gross misconduct usually covers such behaviour as violence in the workplace, theft or other such serious conduct. Yet the client herself expressly stated that she did not want Duke to be dismissed for what he had said and Duke had never been told that such small talk in a housing interview was prohibited. The Council have always accepted that Duke's motivation in speaking to the client was purely one of compassion.

Duke, backed by the Christian Legal Centre, took his case to the tribunal where it was argued that the Council's decision to dismiss him was grossly disproportionate and unfair, and that they had discriminated against him on the basis of his religion. Despite the evidence that was presented to the tribunal, they decided that the Council's response was reasonable. Duke and his legal team intend to appeal the decision.

<http://www.ccfon.org/view.php?id=1156>

