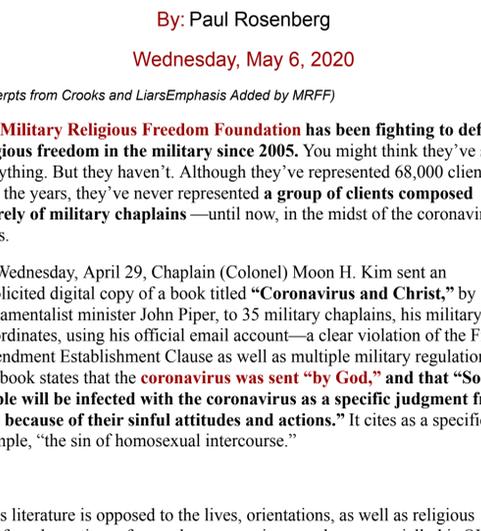


MRFF CONTINUES TO AGGRESSIVELY SUPPORT AND DEFEND 22 CHRISTIAN CHAPLAIN CLIENTS APPALLED BY "CORONAVIRUS AND CHRIST" BOOK

On April 29, Chaplain (COL) Moon H. Kim, senior chaplain at the largest overseas U.S. military base sent an unsolicited copy of fundamentalist preacher John Piper's book "Coronavirus and Christ" to subordinate chaplains, promoting the book's message that the coronavirus is God's judgment for sins, including homosexuality. 22 disgusted mainline and progressive Christian chaplains who received the abhorrent book have come to MRFF for assistance.

COVERAGE BY ARMY TIMES, CROOKS AND LIARS, CBN NEWS, THE BLAZE, AND MORE



Chaplain (COL) Moon H. Kim and cover of Coronavirus and Christ book

CROOKS AND LIARS COVERS MRFF

Chaplains Seek Aid Of Military Religious Freedom Foundation

By: Paul Rosenberg

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

(Excerpts from Crooks and Liars/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation has been fighting to defend religious freedom in the military since 2005. You might think they've seen everything. But they haven't. Although they've represented 68,000 clients over the years, they've never represented a group of clients composed entirely of military chaplains — until now, in the midst of the coronavirus crisis.

On Wednesday, April 29, Chaplain (Colonel) Moon H. Kim sent an unsolicited digital copy of a book titled "Coronavirus and Christ," by fundamentalist minister John Piper, to 35 military chaplains, his military subordinates, using his official email account—a clear violation of the First Amendment Establishment Clause as well as multiple military regulations. The book states that the coronavirus was sent "by God," and that "Some people will be infected with the coronavirus as a specific judgment from God because of their sinful attitudes and actions." It cites as a specific example, "the sin of homosexual intercourse."

"This literature is opposed to the lives, orientations, as well as religious beliefs and practices of a good many service-members, especially his OWN subordinates! This is not only in poor taste/judgment, it is professionally intimidating/threatening." one former Army chaplain wrote in an email to MRFF. "The message, intended or not, is: 'If you want to do well as a chaplain under MY leadership, you need to read and practice good theology like this...!' I expect better of senior Army Chaplain Corps leadership!"

"Our job is to protect the wall separating church and state in the US military," MRFF founder and President Mikey Weinstein told Crooks and Liars. "In this instance, the actions of Chaplain Col. Moon H. Kim violated the 'No Establishment' Clause. He's establishing a religious faith through the use of his senior military position over his otherwise helpless subordinates," Weinstein explained. "We also look at Clause 3, Article 6 which says we'll never have a religious test, and he's essentially creating a de facto religious test for his subordinates and anybody else who's out there."

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ARMY TIMES COVERS MRFF

Complaint alleges senior Army chaplain used military email to share book describing coronavirus as God's judgment

By: Kyle Rempfer

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

(Excerpts from Army Times/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

An advocacy group sometimes at odds with military chaplains sent a letter to the defense secretary last week calling for an investigation into a senior Army chaplain in South Korea who used military email to send 35 subordinates copies of a book that said coronavirus is part of God's punishment for sins.

Mikey Weinstein, founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, said he's representing 22 Christian military chaplains from multiple services, not all of whom were included on the original email. He said the individuals complained about the unsolicited theology distributed by Camp Humphreys Garrison chaplain Col. Moon H. Kim and written by Christian preacher John Piper.

In his free online book, "Coronavirus and Christ," Piper wrote that the current global pandemic is part of God's judgment. "Some people will be infected with the coronavirus as a specific judgment from God because of their sinful attitudes and actions," the book reads. "God sometimes uses disease to bring particular judgments upon those who reject him and give themselves over to sin."

The book sends a message to military personnel that lacks pastoral care and comfort, said Weinstein. "So, if a Chaplain or service member or family member is infected with Coronavirus do they now believe that the Senior Chaplain at USAG Humphreys thinks it is because of some awful sin on their part?" Weinstein asked in his letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

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CBN NEWS COVERS MRFF

US Army Chaplain Under Fire for Sharing Book About Coronavirus by John Piper

By: Tré Goins-Phillips

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

(Excerpts from CBN News/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

Things to remember in 2020: book clubs are (apparently) very bad. Col. Moon H. Kim, a command chaplain stationed at Camp Humphreys in South Korea, passed along an e-book by theologian John Piper, "Coronavirus and Christ," to his colleagues, and now he's in a whole heap of trouble with Mikey Weinstein. Weinstein, founder, and president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation sent a letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper last week, demanding Kim be "swiftly, aggressively, and visibly" punished for sending a benign email about the book.

After hearing from 22 "mainline and progressive" Christian chaplains angry over Kim's email, Weinstein described his two-sentence message as "shocking" and "an absolutely egregious and deplorable act" with an "obvious" motive to show his "full-fledged endorsement and validation of what the book espouses and proclaims."

The handful of perturbed chaplains didn't want to talk to their superior about their anger because they feared "reprisal, retribution, revenge, and retaliation," Weinstein claimed. So they took it to MRFF instead.

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THE BLAZE COVERS MRFF

Army chaplain faces heat for 'egregious' act of sharing evangelical 'Coronavirus and Christ' book with colleagues

By: Phil Shiver

Monday, May 4, 2020

(Excerpts from The Blaze/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A group of 22 military chaplains are calling for a senior Army chaplain to be disciplined after he shared an evangelical book with them using his military email. In a letter sent Wednesday to Defense Secretary Mark Esper, a nonprofit organization, the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, requested that Col. Moon H. Kim be punished for the "absolutely egregious and deplorable act" of sharing a digital copy of the book with 35 subordinate chaplains.

The book in question, "Coronavirus and Christ," was written by popular evangelical author John Piper, the founder and senior teacher of desiringGod.org and chancellor of Bethlehem Bible College and Seminary. According to Michael Weinstein, founder and president of the MRFF, a number of Christian chaplains reached out to his organization after receiving the email. They sought the MRFF's representation due to fear that they would be subjected to "reprisal, retribution, revenge, and retaliation" if they had reached out without anonymity.

"The book, pushing the belief that the Coronavirus is God's judgment, is written by fundamentalist Christian preacher and author John Piper, and singles out, among other things, 'the sin of homosexual intercourse' as deserving 'due penalty,'" Weinstein adds.

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WORLD COVERS MRFF

Sharing encouragement? Not allowed

By: Steve West

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

(Excerpts from The World/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A senior U.S. military chaplain in South Korea is under fire for sending a copy of theologian John Piper's new book, Coronavirus and Christ, to 35 other chaplains under his command. In an email accompanying an attached PDF of the book, U.S. Army Col. Moon H. Kim wrote, "This book has helped me refocus my sacred calling to my savior Jesus Christ to finish strong."

Mikey Weinstein, president of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, sent U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper a letter on Wednesday asking the military to discipline Kim. He criticized Piper for saying the virus can be God's judgment on a range of sins, including homosexuality, even though Piper defended his comment by saying this "does not mean that all individual suffering is a specific judgment for personal sins."

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CHRISTIAN HEADLINES COVERS MRFF

Army Chaplain Under Fire for Recommending John Piper on the Coronavirus to Other Chaplains

By: Scott Slayton

Monday, May 4, 2020

(Excerpts from Christian Headlines/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A senior army chaplain is under fire from twenty-two chaplains under his command because he sent them an email encouraging them to read John Piper's new book Coronavirus and Christ. They are calling for him to face military discipline, including a possible court-martial for what they say is a violation of their freedom of religion. The Military Religious Freedom Foundation sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Mark Esper asking him to investigate the action taken by Colonel Moon H. Kim, who is the command chaplain of U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys in South Korea. Kim sent an email to thirty-five military chaplains from his Army email address with a link to a free copy of Piper's e-book and told them, "This book has helped me refocus my sacred calling to my savior Jesus Christ to finish strong. Hopefully, this small booklet would help you and your Soldiers, their Families and others you serve."

In the letter to Secretary Esper, the MRFF said Colonel Moon's actions were "clearly meant as a full-fledged endorsement and validation of what the book espouses and proclaims. This, in CLEAR effect, especially to the recipients of his shocking e-mail, Chaplain (Colonel) Kim is likewise endorsing and validating the same dictates as established by the author of this book."

The letter on the chaplains' behalf also takes exception with some comments that Piper makes about homosexuality. In chapter 7, Piper said that some people will get the coronavirus as a divine judgment for a particular sin. Piper explained that all judgment is a result of sin in general, but that there are examples in Scripture of God visiting a judgment on someone for particular sins. As an example, he appealed to Romans 1, where the "due penalty" was visited upon men who were "committing shameless acts with men."

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CHRISTIANITY DAILY COVERS MRFF

US Army Chaplain Under Attack for Sharing John Piper's Evangelical Book 'Coronavirus and Christ'

By: Christianity Daily

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

(Excerpts from Christianity Daily/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A senior military chaplain in the United States has been harshly criticized for sending fellow chaplains an email encouraging them to read John Piper's new book on the coronavirus issues. Twenty-two military chaplains are calling on a senior army chaplain to be disciplined and possibly court-martialed. U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper is being pushed by the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), national legal organization, to punish Senior Chaplain Col. Moon H. Kim. Col. Kim is the command chaplain of U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys in South Korea, the largest U.S. military installation outside of the United States.

The book in question, "Coronavirus and Christ," was written by popular evangelical author John Piper, the founder and senior teacher of desiringGod.org and chancellor of Bethlehem Bible College and Seminary. A portion of 22 clients of MRFF included people from the LGBT community "do not subscribe to the ultra-conservative/Reformed/evangelical Christian theology of John Piper."

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PREMIER CHRISTIAN NEWS COVERS MRFF

Army chaplain criticised for sharing John Piper's book on coronavirus

By: Premier Journalist

Monday, May 4, 2020

(Excerpts from Premier Christian News/Emphasis Added by MRFF)

A senior military chaplain in the United States has been harshly criticized for sharing a copy of Pastor John Piper's new book on the coronavirus. Twenty-two US Army chaplains are calling on Senior Chaplain Col. Moon H. Kim to be disciplined for emailing a copy of Coronavirus and Christ to a number of his colleagues. The call was initiated by the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (MRFF), who wrote a letter to Defense Secretary Mark Esper explaining that Kim had sent out the email using his official military email address to 35 other chaplains, attaching an "unsolicited" copy of the popular pastor's new book.

MRFF is representing the 22 disgruntled chaplains, most of whom are representing mainline and progressive Christian traditions. According to the lobby group, the complaining chaplains are upset because they "do not subscribe to the ultra-conservative/Reformed/evangelical Christian theology of John Piper," particularly on issues of sexuality and the punishment of sin.

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MRFF FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT MIKEY WEINSTEIN'S STATEMENT ON SENIOR CHAPLAIN (COL) MOON KIM SENDING ABHORRENT "CORONAVIRUS AND CHRIST" BOOK TO SUBORDINATE CHAPLAINS

Monday, May 4, 2020

"MRFF is currently representing 22 active duty US military chaplains, male and female, straight and gay. All of them are either Protestant or Roman Catholic. They are from the Army, Air Force and Navy. They were literally begging us to fight back on their behalves because they all felt they had no voice to protest and object whatsoever."

"Fundamentalist or dominionist Christians (like U.S. Army Chaplain (COL) Kim believe they have the ABSOLUTE right, pursuant to The Great Commission of Mark 16:15 and Matthew 28:19, to deploy their unconstitutional, weaponized version of the Christian faith utterly unfettered and irrespective of any time, place and manner restrictions at all. Restrictions that are well known and firmly established pursuant to our wonderful U.S. Constitution, it's construing federal and state caselaw as well as the plethora of germane directives, instructions and regulations that have been promulgated by the Department of Defense."

"22 CHRISTIAN military chaplains came to us at MRFF horribly aggrieved by the wretchedly illicit and unconstitutional actions of Chaplain (Colonel) Kim at US Army Garrison Humphreys, South Korea. They would face only the most onerous and oppressive retaliation, revenge and reprisal from both their military chaplain and operational chains of command if they tried to publicly object to this pathetically putrescent, odious email and its attachment sent by this US Army full colonel to them. And, after 15-plus years of MRFF fighting the disgusting filth of fundamentalist/dominionist Christianity night and day, we would agree with the rationality of their fear."

"Imagine how you would feel, as another salient example, if your military superior sent you a similar email clearly endorsing and validating an attached book called "Mein Kampf?"

"MRFF will continue to aggressively support and defend, unconditionally, our 22 CHRISTIAN military chaplains from this tyrannical sectarian action of fundamentalist/dominionist Christian bigotry prejudice and unlimited bullying!"

CLICK FOR BACKGROUND AND TO READ MRFF'S DEMAND LETTER TO SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MARK T. ESPER REGARDING CHAPLAIN (COL) KIM'S ILLICIT EMAILING OF "CORONAVIRUS AND CHRIST" BOOK

MRFF Information/Contact: (505) 250-7727

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