

De: info@ghislainmesse.fr
Objet: Testimony on Discrimination Practices Among Jehovah's Witnesses
Date: 29 novembre 2024 à 06:14
À: postmottak@bfd.dep.no



Dear Sirs,

I have been a Jehovah's Witness since 1985 and served as an elder for 25 years. I currently reside in France.

I have been following the correspondence you exchanged with the association of Jehovah's Witnesses in Norway and Europe.

I wish to share my testimony regarding the impact of the disfellowshipping policy practiced by Jehovah's Witnesses.

A disfellowshipped person loses all social and familial connections. They face discrimination because Jehovah's Witnesses are prohibited from associating with them. For instance, a Jehovah's Witness who associates with a disfellowshipped person, such as their son, risks being disfellowshipped themselves. This is detailed in the elders' book *Shepherd the Flock of God*, chapter 12, point 17.1:

“Unnecessary Association With Disfellowshipped or Disassociated Individuals: Willful, continued, unnecessary association with disfellowshipped or disassociated *non relatives* despite repeated counsel would warrant judicial action. — [Matt. 18:17b](#); [1 Cor. 5:11, 13](#); [2 John 10, 11](#); [lv spp. 39-40](#).

If a publisher in the congregation is known to have unnecessary association with disfellowshipped or disassociated *relatives* who are not in the household, elders should use the Scriptures to counsel and reason with him. Review with him information from the [Remain in God's Love book, page 241](#). If it is clear that a Christian is violating the spirit of the disfellowshipping decree in this regard and does not respond to counsel, he would not qualify for congregation privileges, which require one to be exemplary. He would not be dealt with judicially unless there is persistent *spiritual* association or he persists in openly criticizing the disfellowshipping decision.”

In 2021, I myself counseled a Jehovah's Witness associating with his disfellowshipped son, following this exact procedure. As my own son is disfellowshipped, I had to limit contact with him. My wife, who is also a Jehovah's Witness, suffered psychologically from this forced separation.

If the Governing body complains that they are being discriminated against, they should examine their own practices.

Discrimination does not stop with disfellowshipped individuals. Recently, the governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses mandated that all Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide receive multiple COVID-19 vaccinations. Those who refused were sidelined, criticized, and disfellowshipped (see the testimonies on [adverse-events-jw.org](#)). The most blatant instance of discrimination occurred on December 19, 2022, when an official letter was sent to all elders, barring unvaccinated elders and pioneers from training sessions ([source](#)). This policy remained in place for over a year, despite laws in many countries prohibiting such discrimination, including Norway's **Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act**. I have filed a complaint in France regarding this discrimination. Moreover, coordinators of bodies of elders were instructed to verify the vaccination status of elders, a practice strictly prohibited by law.

I am willing to testify on these matters if needed.

Yours sincerely,

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