Letters: Houston mayor did not try to punish preachers

November 1, 2014

I believe your statement, "… the Houston mayor's office tried to punish preachers for political views based on sincerely held religious beliefs …" misses several obvious points.

• I do not see an attempt to "punish" the preachers.

• If the preachers did not violate any laws, they should have welcomed the opportunity to have their ideas, ostensibly from the inspiration of God, to be disseminated among the "movers and shakers" of local government.

• If the preachers' words could be interpreted as "hate speech," they should be of interest and concern to society.

• After 65 years of Baptist-style preaching, I do not remember any one of my sermons as being open to punishment; I would welcome the opportunity to have them broadcast, debated and critiqued by anybody. I would only be enriched by such attention, whether supported or censored.

Hal Eaton

Mouth of Wilson, Va.

Gays & the church's 'mistake'

Let's take a practical look at the problem of gays and the church: In biblical days, people … didn't know the earth was round. How much do we think they knew about human sexuality?

Scripture was written by heterosexual men—not Jesus, not women, not gay

men—mere mortal heterosexual males who probably had the same fears as anyone else in this modern age who doesn't like people who are different than they are. Nature puts gay people on this planet. There will always be gay babies—maybe to cut down on over-population, maybe to cut down on the aggression of heterosexual males who lead us into wars every 20 years. Ignore the anti-gay prejudice in the Bible, and Christianity's problem with the issue will disappear.

Which brings me to my own theory: People who don't ignore the anti-gay prejudice in the Bible don't like gay people. I'm a Christian, and I have never paid attention to it.

When asked about gays, gay marriage and the Baptist church, Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said, "We would indeed have to overturn 2,000 years of the church's teaching on sex and marriage and apologize for the horrible embarrassment of being wrong for so long."

The smart move would be to admit that mistake. Science is coming closer to proving homosexuality has a genetic component. Wouldn't it be wiser for the Catholic Church to admit its mistake now, with dignity, rather than later—when it is forced to?

Ed Fardella

Beverly Hills, Calif.