



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Freedom of Conscience and Religion: Indispensable Support of Our Freedoms, Equality and Safety

"Conscience is the most sacred of all property." - James Madison, 1792.

George Washington - "The liberty enjoyed by the people of these states of worshipping Almighty God, agreeable to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but of their rights."

Our founders established a nation where all religions could be exercised without discrimination or fear of persecution. They knew a moral and religious citizenry was vital to the exercise and survival of our extensive individual liberties, recognition of equality among men and the safe and respected practices of multiple religious sects.

1st Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Our 1st amendment asserts each citizen's right to be free from government-imposed religion and to follow their conscience in the practice of the faith they may choose. The other four freedoms in the first amendment are essential support to Freedom of Conscience/Religion:

- Freedom of speech empowers us to speak about our faith, to pray with others and to evangelize our beliefs.
- Freedom of the press empowers us to print our Bibles and books of prayer and worship and to spread our faith through the printed word.
- Freedom to assemble empowers us to come together in our churches, communities and public squares to worship, celebrate and evangelize.
- Freedom of redress empowers us to challenge the government when it oversteps the wall of separation clearly described in Thomas Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists, to keep government out of the affairs of each citizen's beliefs and religious practices.

A lack of education in the facts of our freedom of conscience as a founding principle and pillar of our liberties has led to generations of Americans denying religious freedom in our schools, colleges and the public square of ideas and governance. That denial has worsened into intolerance, intimidation, and a shocking and dangerous increase in hate crimes in our nation.

Read more here: <http://bit.ly/470f7ji>