

July 2018

A Monthly Publication of the Christian Law Association

LEGAL ALERT

When I think of America
Part II



When I Think of America Part II

Last month we published several alarming statistics about how American youth are turning away from Christ. While these statistics are sadly true, let us not forget God is always working, both in America and abroad.

Did you know that nearly a third of the world's 7.3 billion residents still identify as Christian? Between 2010 and 2015, 107 million Christians passed away, but that number was surpassed by an estimated 223 million babies born to Christian mothers.

Abroad, Christianity is seeing some amazing explosive growth in many countries, due in no small part to the work of faithful missionaries across the globe. In 1900, more than half of the world's population was still unreached by the gospel. Today, that percentage has dropped substantially to only 29.3 percent. In 1970, only 0.1% of the Chinese population identified as Christian. The study estimated that by 2020, that number will have leapt astronomically to 10.6% and will continue to grow.



Interestingly, out of 20 countries that show the highest percentage of growth for Christianity, eleven of these countries currently have a Muslim majority. In fact, the highest Christian growth rates are found among all major non-Christian religious groups: Hindus, Buddhists, Muslim, and others. 19 countries out of 20 with the highest Christian growth are found in Asia and Africa. On a global scale, it is wonderful to know that Christianity is growing. When people are presented with the truth of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit works in even the darkest of areas.

In America, while it is true we are seeing a surge of atheism, research shows that Christians are consistently shown to always have a positive effect on their local communities. Violent crime decreases in communities with greater numbers of people who are actively religious.

One study analyzed nearly 200 counties in New York, California, and Texas, and the results of the study were amazing: black and white violence significantly decreased as the percentage rose of county residents who belonged to churches, especially those who attended regular services. Across the board, the study found that young adults who identified as religious were less likely to commit crime. Studies also show other ways that Christians are a blessing to their communities: an incredible 96% of practicing Christians donate at least one time per year to either a church or a non-profit, compared to a much lower 60% of donating atheists or agnostics.

So while there is cause for concern regarding the religious state of America, we should never forget that we serve an Almighty God Who continues to work across the globe and is ready and willing to use each and every one of us to better our communities and spread His Word. Are you willing to be used as Isaiah? Search your heart and say: "Here am I; send me." Be ready to go around the corner as well as around the world.

WHAT CAN YOU SAY IN AMERICA?

You cannot listen to the news today without immediately hearing of multiple individuals currently being faced with scrutiny over inappropriate speech, whether it be blog posts, verbal statements, or even something said over social media like Twitter. Some of these people have been fired as a result; some have not. After nearly every action (or inaction) by their employers, a fiery debate ensues across the spectrum: should someone be fired for what they said when off the clock?

Is this a violation of their freedom of speech? And for many, the most important question becomes, could it happen to you? The answer, as with the majority of legal issues, is complicated.

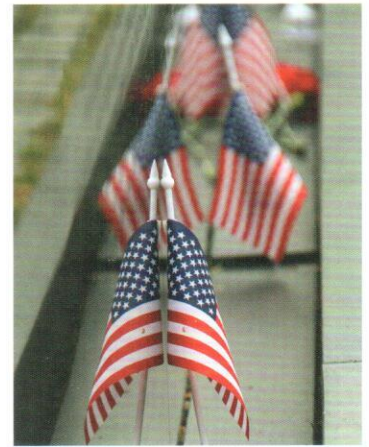
First, it's important to understand that the majority

of these cases do not involve any sort of free speech violation. The First Amendment to the Constitution simply sets forth that the government cannot make any law abridging the freedom of speech. Most of these employment situations do not involve laws against the speech in question. Ultimately, the individual is not being threatened with criminal prosecution in any way – they are entitled to their right to express their

viewpoints, no matter what perspective they hold. Whether their employer must put up with those views, on the other hand, is a different story.

There is certainly an argument to be made that an employer should not be forced to continue associating with someone who holds reprehensible views. For instance, your ministry would surely wish to disassociate with a staff member who announced on his Facebook that he agreed with anti-Biblical beliefs. We would definitely argue you should absolutely have every legal right to let that employee go.

However, for Christians, this "right" of employers can quickly take a more sinister turn – who decides what views are "reprehensible" or "wrong" in the secular workplace? The moral authority may be skewed by a wide range of worldly views



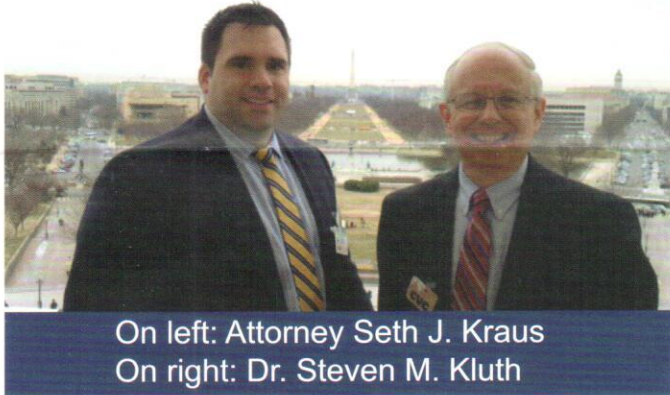
on multiple subjects. We have seen many Christians face strict reprimands or worse on the job for speaking out on traditional marriage values, even when they are off the clock. Not long ago, a fire chief in Georgia was fired by the city

for daring to mention his support for traditional marriage in a devotional book he wrote in his spare time. In this case, a federal court ruled against the city, finding that their regulations for employees regarding off-the-clock speech were too broad to "pass constitutional muster". However, it's important to note this particular case involved both the government as an employer and other broad rules. Your case, your state, and

your situation may be entirely different. With every issue, there are new facts involved that must be taken into account.

Does your employment contract have a social media policy? If so, then it is likely you will be expected to abide by that policy during your employment, and your employer can potentially terminate you for violating it. However, we firmly believe in speaking out for the Lord in your local

area. If you have questions about whether you can speak out about Biblical things in your situation, contact our office to speak with one of our attorneys at no charge to you. If you are experiencing difficulty at work because of your religious views, please contact our attorneys today.



On left: Attorney Seth J. Kraus
On right: Dr. Steven M. Kluth



ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LAW ASSOCIATION

The Christian Law Association is a ministry of legal helps.

CLA serves through the following ways:

- Free legal defense of those facing difficulties for the Biblical faith
- Free legal counsel to churches and Christians for their ministries
- Legal seminars for ministries to help prevent lawsuits
- Preaching in churches across the country
- Legal books and other resources to inform Christians of their rights
- *The Legal Alert* radio program broadcast on over 1,300 outlets around the world
- Publication of a monthly newsletter, *The Legal Alert*
- Free legal consulting to local, state, and federal officials and legislators to provide maximum religious liberty
- Intercessory prayer ministry for requests sent to the ministry offices
- Free legal help to homeschooling families
- Prayer for our national leadership and government



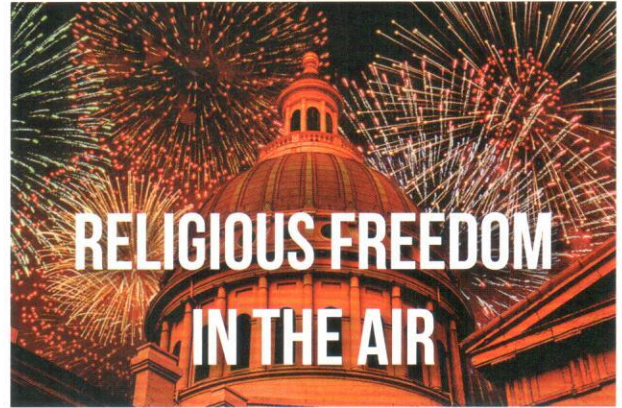
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VICTORY IN THE SKIES

While our nation continues to become more adverse towards God's truth, and the fight to preserve our religious freedom grows fiercer every day, it is important to recognize and appreciate the victories that only He can produce.

Our attorneys were recently contacted by a Christian woman from Florida who was also a flight attendant for a major airline. This airline had recently implemented a strict clothing and jewelry policy for all employees. While the company quickly made exceptions for hijabs worn by Muslim employees, the company refused to allow any exception for religious items worn by Christian employees. She was being discriminated against.

She contacted our attorneys, who advised her as to her legal right to request a religious accommodation in regard to her cross necklace, which she had worn previously with no issues. We praise the Lord for individuals who have a conviction to stand for the Lord as the Bible commands! After she presented the information from our legal team, the airline backed down.



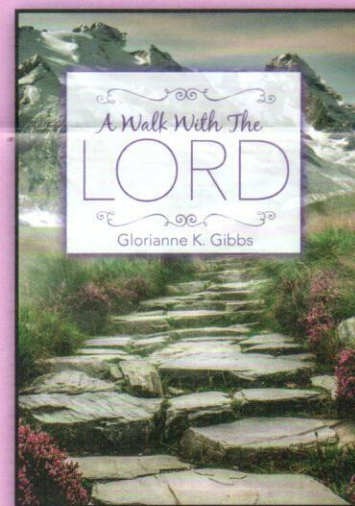
In fact, the airline management apologized, changed their stance, and allowed her to continue wearing her cross necklace while on duty.

Victories like this one are crucial! It is vital that Christians continue to assert our legal rights to ensure they are not stepped on or ignored by the world. We encourage believers to take every moment they can to engage in witnessing to those around them! God is so good to each of us, far more than we deserve. Join us in praising God for this positive outcome and others like it!

A Walk With The
LORD
Glorianne K. Gibbs

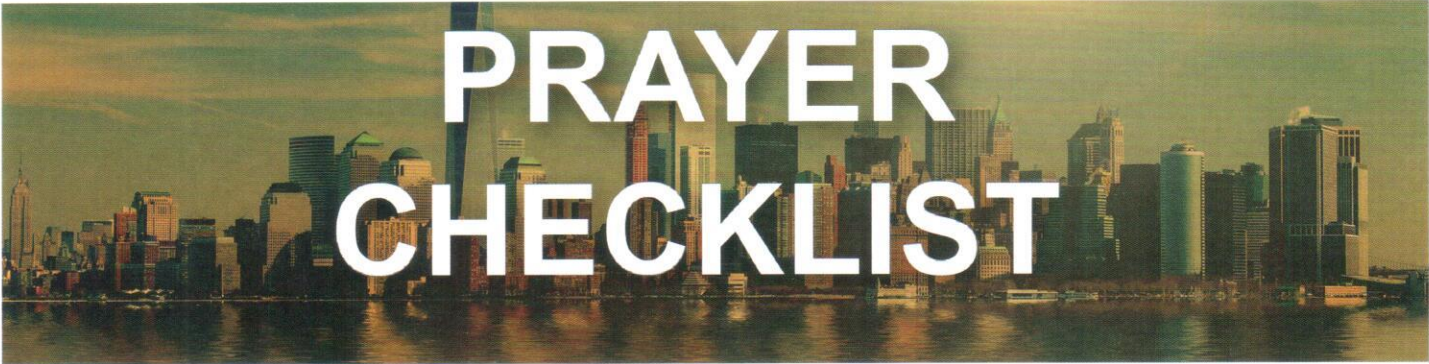
This newest book
by Mrs. Glorianne Gibbs challenges you
to reach new heights
in your personal walk with God.

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PRAYER CHECKLIST

- ✓ Pray for a church in **LOUISIANA** that called our ministry to ensure that the church has been legally set up correctly.
- ✓ Please pray for a church in **FLORIDA** that called our legal staff for direction with a desire to open a ministry campground and RV park.
- ✓ Pray for a Christian in **TEXAS** who called with an estate planning question about making sure his final wishes will be followed when it comes to personal assets.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **GEORGIA** as it works through the legal process of changing its name.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **CONNECTICUT** that called for legal help as it restructures some issues with ministry payroll for new employees.
- ✓ Pray for a pastor of a **TEXAS** church as he seeks the Lord's direction on how to legally handle some new zoning issues regarding a cemetery which the church governs.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **PENNSYLVANIA** that called CLA to help with appealing a decision where church property had been incorrectly excluded from its tax exempt status.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **MICHIGAN** that called our office with the desire to provide housing to their pastoral staff under the confines of the law.
- ✓ Pray for a church issue in **NEW YORK** where our legal staff is dealing with an upset group of people trying to undermine the church membership's wishes with the city.
- ✓ Please pray for a church in **WISCONSIN** that called for legal counsel because someone has been embezzling money from the church.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **FLORIDA** that contacted CLA and is diligently working to update the church's constitution & bylaws.
- ✓ Praise the Lord that a church in **GEORGIA** was able to make a sound decision on an employment matter after speaking with CLA attorneys.
- ✓ Please pray for a church in **WISCONSIN** that contacted CLA because it is being threatened with a lawsuit from a former church attender.
- ✓ Pray for a church in **FLORIDA** that contacted our ministry as it makes the difficult decision whether or not to hire a security company to handle security matters during service times.
- ✓ Pray for Christian public school students in **WASHINGTON** who were suspended for wearing t-shirts expressing Biblical values.
- ✓ Pray for a Christian worker in **WASHINGTON** who called our attorneys because he was told Sunday work is required in order to receive a promotion, even though his employer is aware of his conviction to attend Sunday church services.
- ✓ Please pray for a Christian in **IOWA** who called CLA because he is dealing with repercussions after voicing Biblical opinions on homosexuality while at the workplace.