

The image features the Statue of Liberty in the foreground, holding her torch aloft. The background is a vibrant display of fireworks exploding in the night sky, with colors ranging from red and orange to green and blue. The lower portion of the background is dominated by the stars and stripes of the American flag. The overall scene is celebratory and patriotic.

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THE **LEGAL**
ALERT



The Gospel of Matthew records the words that our Lord Jesus spoke when He delivered the Sermon on the Mount. Part of that life-changing sermon says, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid” (Matthew 5:14).

Some of the earliest English settlers in America were well aware of this verse. For example, when John Winthrop was aboard the *Arbella*, he delivered a famous sermon titled “A Model of Christian Charity.” Referring to Matthew 5:14, Winthrop preached, “For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.”

Many years later, President Ronald Reagan used Matthew 5:14 and Winthrop’s sermon to describe his vision of American exceptionalism, and in his Farewell Address, he spoke of America as “the shining city upon a hill.”

This example demonstrates that the United States has a strong Christian heritage, but countless other examples could be identified. When the Pilgrims arrived in New England on November 11, 1620, they signed the Mayflower Compact which begins, “Having undertaken for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith....”

During the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin asserted, “I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?”

George Washington’s Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1789 begins, “Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor....”

Sadly, many secularists are all too happy to kick God out of the public square these days. People who delight in being offended claim that the mention of God harms them. Some

smooth-talking legislators try to make it easy for anti-God messages to be proclaimed, but hard for pro-God messages to be heard.

As Christians in America, we can truly be thankful for our religious heritage. At the same time, we cannot suppose that our religious freedom will endure forever if we do not actively do our part to assure it does. In a practical sense, it does us little good to have the right to own and read a Bible if we never do so; and it seems almost pointless to have the constitutional freedom to share the message of the Gospel if we never do so.

As we reflect on our nation’s founding, we should renew our desire to follow the way of the Lord. We should never forget the power of prayer and the Scriptural commands that instruct us to pray for our political leaders. President George W. Bush said, “I am sustained by the prayers of the people in this country. I guess an appropriate way to say this is that it is one of the beautiful things about America. Americans from all walks of life are willing to pray for the President and his family. And that’s powerful. It’s hard for me to describe to you what that means.”

When election seasons approach, we should be sure that we are registered to vote, and we should vote with our Christian values in mind. When policies and laws are considered in our towns and cities, we should stand for truth, morality, and sanity.

Please remember the attorneys of the Christian Law Association in your prayers. Our legal missionaries work tirelessly to provide legal protection for Bible-preaching churches and to battle for religious freedom in courts across the land.

While there are many citizens who wander far from the faith of our Founding Fathers, God still has a remnant of faithful Christians who fervently care about our nation. May we never cease to pray that our gracious Heavenly Father will continue to bless America.



WHY DO AMERICANS CELEBRATE THE FOURTH OF JULY WITH FIREWORKS?

Fireworks have been associated with the Fourth of July for centuries. In tracing this history, some people point to a letter that John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail.

I am apt to believe that [the Fourth of July] will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the Day of Deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations from one end of the continent to the other from this time forward forever more.

—John Adams

THE IMPORTANCE OF VIRTUE



In the first chapter of 2 Peter, the Apostle used the word *virtue* twice. In 2 Peter 1:3, he taught Christian people that they have been called to “glory and virtue.” Just two verses later, the Bible admonishes Christians to “add to your faith virtue” (2 Peter 1:5).

The word *virtue* suggests moral excellence. God’s people are commanded to conscientiously add moral excellence to their Christian faith, and this is not something that can be done incidentally or accidentally.

Christians who have worked hard on adding virtue are usually able to weather storms with a gracious attitude. The character they exercise to add virtue seems to simultaneously give them patience and grace.

When Christians are sued for the faith, nothing makes a better impression on a jury than people who are truly good people, people who have done their best with the power of the Holy Spirit to be morally excellent people as the Bible commands.

LABOR LAW POSTERS FOR THE CHURCH

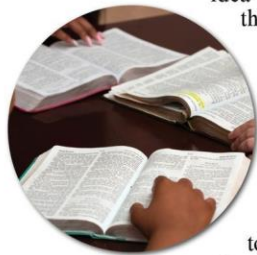
Most people have seen labor law posters in their workplace. Often, these are posted in the mail room, break room, or some other place where employees are likely to congregate.

If churches have employees, they are also required to post certain labor laws, including notices about the minimum wage law.

If you have questions about this important topic, please contact our offices. Our attorneys can tell you exactly what needs to be posted in your state, and we may even be able to direct you to sources that provide these posters free of charge.



ESTABLISHING BIBLE CLUBS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL



During these days, many people have the wrong idea that Christians have no rights at all in their local public schools. Though it is true that the government forbids teachers from evangelizing students, it is not true that the students themselves have to shed their religious liberties when they attend public school. If your local school allows students to form clubs, then they must allow students to form a Bible club. In order to establish a Bible club properly, it must be an idea initiated by the students, and it must be organized and operated by the students.

In other words, members of the public school staff cannot direct the teaching of the club.

Most schools require each club to have a staff sponsor. In the case of a Bible club, sponsors can help students interact with the administrative policies of the school, but they cannot teach Bible lessons—or direct students about what should be discussed.

If you have questions about students’ legal rights to form a Bible club in their public schools, please contact our offices right away! It would be our privilege to help students know how to proceed in the coming school year.

CHURCH SECURITY TEAMS

In modern America, it is essential for churches to have effective security teams. But when churches begin to establish these teams, they often are faced with many tough questions like these:

- “Should the security team be armed or unarmed?”
- “Should the security team utilize active and/or retired police officers?”
- “Should the security team include former members of the military and/or those on active duty?”
- “What role does the church insurance company need to play in determining effective security policy?”

In many cases, churches need the advice of seasoned attorneys who understand the details of their state law, attorneys who have seen the effectiveness of many different approaches to church security and have handled negative situations caused by problematic policies that are best avoided.

If you are forming a security team or if it is time to review your security team’s policies, you would benefit from our *Sample Security Manual*, a resource we have prepared to help local ministries craft policies and procedures that are legally sound. In addition, our attorneys stand ready to assist you if you have specific questions about your church security program. It is the duty of church leadership to do everything possible to protect the people who attend your services!





In the 1600s, the nation of England had some unstable religious laws. If a Protestant became King, the official state religion became Protestant, and there were penalties for Dissenters. But if the next monarch was Catholic, the official state religion became Catholic. Everyone had to happily convert, or at least pretend to do so, unless they were willing to suffer religious persecution at the hands of the new monarchy.

In light of this persecution, many Pilgrims and Puritans made the life-altering decision to leave behind everything they knew and give all they had, often sacrificing their lives, to make the treacherous and difficult journey to North America. They were a people seeking freedom to worship and stability in the law.

Still, over time, the English government began to assert more control of the North American colonies. Eventually, heavy taxes began to be levied on the Americans, even though they had no representatives in the British Parliament.

Wanting to be completely free from British rule, the colonists eventually decided to break away from England. Because of their belief that God grants people basic

human rights, honorable men crafted the Declaration of Independence to proclaim that men are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.” And these founders of our nation gave their all for the chance to live a life where they were free to exercise those rights.

The Revolutionary War was brutal, but, against all odds, the Americans succeeded in that effort to secure their independence from England and set about establishing a new nation.

Today, our nation is quickly losing its way. National pride is a thing of the past in many places in our country. Those who wish to deny American citizens the freedoms that our great land has offered since its inception have done much to bring that to pass by purposely failing to teach the next generation the history of how and why America came to be.

Parents, please take the opportunity on this fourth of July to teach your children why we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Freedom is never free, but coming generations will never appreciate what they are never taught.



KEEPING THE MUSIC IN TUNE

It may be hard to believe, but church music programs have the ability to cause serious legal and financial problems for a church!

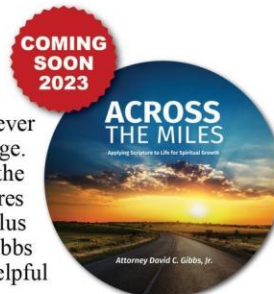
Many times, church musicians don't give a second thought to photocopying music for the church choir. But even if your church has a copyright license, such as the licenses available from CCLI, you do not have permission to copy music for the choir. If you are ever sued for this, the financial penalties are enormous and could potentially bankrupt most ministries!

Be sure you have the licenses you need for livestreaming your services. Remember, you can freely livestream the preaching of the Gospel, but livestreaming copyrighted music can result in a legal nightmare. In some scenarios, churches make recordings of music and sell them to members and to friends of the ministry. What they forget or neglect to explore is the requirement to pay licensing fees when recording copyrighted music. This is not optional, and the details can sometimes be tricky. For example, the song “Amazing Grace” is in the public domain and can be recorded freely—but a specific arrangement of “Amazing Grace” may be copyrighted, and a license would be required in order to record the arrangement.

If you have any questions about music copyrights and licensing, please contact our offices. You might also benefit greatly from our resource titled *Copyright Issues for Churches & Ministries*.

COMING SOON: **ACROSS THE MILES**

Few people are more willing to “tell on themselves” than Dr. David Gibbs. If you have ever heard him preach, you likely remember the story he used to illustrate the point of his message. In his newest book, he shares real-life stories that cover the gamut from the hilarious to the heartbreaking followed by Scriptural application for our everyday lives. The volume explores friendship, forgiveness, wisdom, humility, faith, prayer, and much more. These thirty-plus chapters are well-suited to individual reading or daily devotional use. The questions Dr. Gibbs urges us to ask as we examine ourselves in light of the Word of God are both convicting and helpful as we pursue spiritual maturity in our walk with the Lord.





A MINISTRY OF **LEGAL HELPS**

CLA SERVES YOU 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 books and other resources to inform Christians of their rights
- Weekday radio program broadcast, *The Legal Alert*, on over 1,586 outlets around the world
- Publication of *The Legal Alert*, a monthly newsletter
- 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 initiative for our national leadership and government
- Legal seminars for ministries to help prevent lawsuits
- Preaching in churches across the country



These requests are a small sampling of those we have received in recent weeks. We covet your prayers for these and the hundreds of others that we are unable to list due to space restrictions.

CHURCHES

MISSOURI: Pray for a ministry director requesting guidance from our attorneys as he considers a new Gospel outreach for local children.

IOWA: Pray for a pastor seeking legal guidance about starting a local public school Bible club to reach students with the Gospel.

OHIO: Pray for a ministry team needing advice about working with local school districts to promote Biblical values.

WISCONSIN: Pray for a public-school Bible club advisor seeking our help because the public school is requiring him to move the meetings outside normal club hours to before or after school.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pray for a group of churches working together to implement change in their city by starting conversations with city council members regarding unbiblical events being hosted in the community.

ALASKA: Pray for a pastor needing guidance on stopping unbiblical events being held in his local public library.

OHIO: Pray for a pastor seeking our assistance in approaching the local public school regarding concerning policies put in place for students.

NEW YORK: Pray for a pastor's wife who is being refused access for her church group to come pray at the public-school flagpole. Pray for our attorneys as we assist in clarifying the specific rights of both church and school in this matter.

TENNESSEE: Pray for a pastor who contacted our office regarding a difficulty his church is facing with the city in determining ownership of the church property.

FLORIDA: Pray for a church nursery director as our attorneys help her understand the requirements for nursery safety.

FLORIDA: Pray for a nonprofit leader needing help from our attorneys in determining the differences between regulations for volunteers and employees of his ministry.

ILLINOIS: Pray for a church board member needing direction about counseling church guests and the proper use of church facilities.

WEST VIRGINIA: Pray for a pastor as our attorneys assist in clarifying successors for the church property and cemetery.

ILLINOIS: Pray for a pastor dealing with a problematic situation involving a disgruntled church member.

GEORGIA: Pray for a pastor and his church as he navigates and deals with a situation from many years ago involving former staff.

COLORADO: Pray for a security team member as he helps the liability of unauthorized use of the church playground.

FLORIDA: Pray for a church seeking assistance in creating a hiring contract for a new pastor.

OHIO: Pray for a pastor seeking guidance on church liability for church events involving food service.

OHIO: Pray for a pastor needing legal counsel to deal with a contractor who performed work on the church roof.

CALIFORNIA: Pray for a church that received a legal summons and our attorneys as they advise the board.

VIRGINIA: Pray for a pastor as he navigates a situation where a potential employee in the hiring process was discovered to have a lifestyle that differs from what the church requires for employees.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Pray for a pastor as our attorneys assist with legal counsel on a summons the church received.

TEXAS: Pray for a pastor seeking help on reception and disbursement of church funds.

NEW MEXICO: Pray for a pastor needing legal guidance as he handles a situation involving a volunteer and a church family.

COLORADO: Pray for a treasurer needing legal assistance with the church's benevolence policy.

ARIZONA: Pray for a camp director seeking legal counsel about updating policies for youth camps.

ALABAMA: Pray for a pastor seeking guidance on taxes and finance requirements for pastors.

INDIVIDUALS

COLORADO: Pray for a Christian seeking legal advice because he was given a final warning for replying to a company statement and stating his religious beliefs regarding the matter.

TEXAS: Pray for a Christian woman whose workplace is refusing to allow her to begin her new manager position because of her religious conviction about the need to wear skirt.

NEW YORK: Pray for a Christian with questions regarding consenting to workplace policies against her Christian beliefs.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Pray for a Christian business owner seeking our help as she implements a social media policy she learned about during one of CLA's radio segments, *The Legal Alert*.

TENNESSEE: Pray for a county clerk seeking legal counsel because her office received a letter demanding that they stop offering Bibles donated to the office by a local radio station.

CALIFORNIA: Pray for a Christian desiring to provide resources for public-school employees that inform them of their religious rights in the workplace as

teachers and principals, and resources for parents of students in the public school that inform them of their rights as parents of a child in public school.

TEXAS: Pray for a Christian told by her employer that Sunday work was mandatory. Our attorneys offered guidance on how to approach the situation with her supervisor.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pray for a public school student told not to bring his Bible to school as his mother fights for his right to do so using resources our attorneys provided to assist her.

ILLINOIS: Pray for wisdom as our attorneys assist the guardian of a public school student given a bad grade for missing a Sunday track team meet because she was attending church.

GEORGIA: Pray for a volunteer chaplain told he had to supply additional religious materials that do not align with his beliefs.

TEXAS: Pray for a youth pastor seeking guidance on witnessing to and discussing various topics with public school students.

MASSACHUSETTS: Pray for a counselor seeking legal guidance on handling a situation where he is being slandered because of his Christian beliefs.

KANSAS: Pray for a Christian seeking our help regarding being refused time off to attend a church service once a week.

CALIFORNIA: Pray for a pastor's wife seeking legal advice when her religious accommodation for time off for church services was discontinued because of new scheduling.

ILLINOIS: Pray for a Christian seeking advice about his legal rights as he responds to an employer request that he go against his religious beliefs.

FLORIDA: Pray for a Christian under investigation by his employer because he was questioned on his Biblical views on popular topics.

OHIO: Pray for a Christian seeking legal advice as she plans for her daughter's future and fights for her Christian rights in an assisted living facility.

ALASKA: Pray for a Christian seeking legal advice about his options as a landlord because of a tenant on the floor above his non-profit who is causing issues for the ministry.

NEW JERSEY: Pray for a pastor asking for legal guidance as he considers assisting a missionary who is dealing with false allegations.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

INDIANA: Pray for a ministry seeking guidance on the different avenues of childcare and education.

CALIFORNIA: Pray for a pastor needing legal advice as he sets up a security team for his Christian school.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pray for a Christian school principal navigating a situation with social services and a student.

WISCONSIN: Pray for a pastor as he seeks information regarding the rights of the Christian school.

FLORIDA: Pray for a principal seeking guidance as she navigates a parent plan for a student going through a family custody case.

VIRGINIA: Pray for a pastor needing advice about handling the disgruntled parents of a student who did not follow a school rule.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pray for a school administrator asking for guidance on a problematic situation involving former students.

FLORIDA: Pray for a pastor seeking our assistance as he updates Christian school handbooks.

GEORGIA: Pray for a Christian school chairman handling a difficult situation regarding the enrollment of a child.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pray for a homeschool group board member needing advice about creating appropriate registration questions for families registering their students.

PENNSYLVANIA: Pray for a homeschool group board member seeking our legal help as the group considers incorporation.

FLORIDA: Pray for a school chairman working with our attorneys regarding the discretion Christian schools have with regard to school functions.

WEST VIRGINIA: Pray for an associate pastor seeking information regarding the legalities of certain requirements for school staff.

NEW MEXICO: Pray for a school administrator seeking legal guidance on properly handling fundraiser money.

NORTH CAROLINA: Pray for a pastor as our attorneys assist him in handling several situations with parents of students in the church's Christian school.

