

# Christian Action Ministry Newsletter

Involving the Christian in Community Action

March—April, 2017★ Vol. 27, Number 02

# Inside

## Christian Persecution Increases

By  
Dick Trudell

Amid the cries of discrimination against particular groups that we hear about in the media, mention of Christian persecution is lacking. Here in the United States we are relatively secure, but in the rest of the world, and particularly in Islamic countries, Christian persecution has been on the increase.

Open Doors, an organization that helps persecuted Christians throughout the world has noted that 2016 was the worst year for Christian persecution in the 25 years they have been monitoring it. Their monitoring includes both political and societal restrictions, and their report states, "Christians throughout the world continue to risk imprisonment, loss of home and assets, torture, beatings, rape and even death as a result of their faith."

called Christians the most persecuted religious group in the world.

Open Doors' Watch List for 2017 looks at five issues of human life: private, family, community, national, and church, as well as religious motivated violence to rank the 50 worst offenders in the world as either high, very high, or extreme persecutors of Christians.

The top 10 nations with extreme persecution are:

- 1) North Korea
- 2) Somalia
- 3) Afghanistan
- 4) Pakistan
- 5) Sudan
- 6) Syria
- 7) Iraq
- 8) Iran
- 9) Yemen
- 10) Eritrea

previously, 9 have Muslim populations exceeding 50%.

***The most violent nation is Pakistan, based on religious motivated violence.***

***In the western hemisphere, Mexico is rated 41st and Columbia is rated 50th as overall persecutors.***

It is illegal to be a Christian in North Korea, and Christians are often sent to labor camps or killed if they are discovered. The conditions in this country have remained the worst in the world for Christians for the past 13 years.

For more information see [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org)

Dick Trudell is President of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Community Bible Church in So. Burlington

The Center for Studies on New Religions, a separate organization, noted that in 2016 the number of Christian killed for their faith was 90,000, and

Islamic extremism is the prime motivator for Christian persecution, being high on the list in 35 of the 50 worst offenders. Of the top 10 offenders listed

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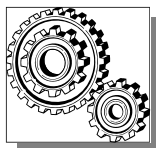
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**If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please call 655-0280, email, or contact our website (see back page)**



**In the Works**

### Vermont Legislature

Are you interested in becoming involved? CAM is looking for interested and active people to act as liaisons to their church, helping to keep the Christian community informed. Contact CAM at 372-6442.

**"We find no constitutional requirement which makes it necessary for government to be hostile to religion and to throw its weight against efforts to widen the effective scope of religious influence ... We cannot read into the Bill of Rights such a philosophy of hostility to religion."**

**Supreme Court Justice William Douglas**

# Fire in the Lap

By  
Lauston Stephens

**S**ecular media in Vermont have written about refugees coming to Rutland. Here is one Christian perspective from someone living in Rutland.

At first glance, many will say bringing in refugees is the "Christian" thing to do: "Whatsoever you would have others do unto you, even so, do unto them." If you had to flee your home, extended family, job, school, everything -- and travel thousands of miles and wait for months, wouldn't you want to be welcomed with open arms? Of course.

Furthermore, in many cultures where refugees come from, hospitality is a highly valued social norm. To the extent that is missing, the receiving community will seem backward and crude. We wouldn't want that for "Christian" America.

So why are there Christians reacting just like their secular neighbors? What is wrong with just embracing core Christian values: "Do unto to others as you would have others do unto you," and "Love your (new) neighbor as yourself"?

Christians may be just like others in their wariness of the motives and intentions and the abilities and wisdom of those making decisions that will have unforeseen consequences. Our faith in the Lord of all the earth does not exempt us from personal responsibility or civic duty.

Also, there is a "big picture" view of what the refugees want. The American story is one of people coming to flee religious persecution or to find economic opportunity. War refugees aren't really in either of those categories. If they had been, they would have started the emigration process before the war broke out. They really didn't want to come to America, so what they would like most is not that America welcome them but that we help make it possible for them to return home.

But, let's take another look at the "Golden Rule." It is part of the "Sermon on the Mount," Chapters 5-7 in the Gospel of Matthew. The audience was almost entirely Jewish: they accepted that they had a Creator who is Lord and King of the universe; who would be their Judge. The King of all the earth makes the rules. He is the ultimate lawgiver.

When the Golden Rule is applied outside of that context, by people that do not bend their knee nor bow their head to their Creator, those people are not doing the "Christian" thing, they are doing the secular humanist thing.

The same impulse to re-invent society with same-sex marriage and transgender restrooms is the impulse to mix highly diverse cultures in the naive notion that these changes will make the world a better place. They make the world a more confused place. It is like trying to mix water and oil, or worse, nitro and glycerin.

There is a reaction impulse, "God-fearing Bible-believers must take control." The track record of the Church on the throne of a society demonstrates the need for the return of the true King. We have lacked the wisdom of Solomon, the skill to thread the needle where justice and mercy meet. We must be involved, but don't pour all your energy into taking over.

Let's say the vetting process is everything that it is supposed to be. Before the refugees left their homes, they were not interested in war or struggle with anyone. They just wanted to

live normal lives. But normal to them in many ways followed the norm of most of the earth for most of history: men were men, women were women, marriage meant children.

People's worst fears are usually not realized. Let's say no one is radicalized before they get here. What they find when they get here is everything that is needed to radicalize some. Would you accept that as judgment on America? What they find could also democratically ally some against the moral decline of the West. Have you been preparing for that?

"Can a man scoop fire into his lap and his clothes not be burned?" - Proverbs. 6:27

God works all things together for good but usually not in the way we expect. An influx of morally conservative people could "burn the clothes" of only those people who want to engineer society. Readers of this newsletter are just the ones to be the influence for the best possible outcome.

*Lauston Stephens is a Board member of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Roadside Assembly of God in Rutland.*

**"If we and our posterity reject religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity."**

*Daniel Webster*

# Did You Know? A Brief Historical Glimpse

By  
Marion Clegg

**D**id you know that the United States of America has had only ONE Constitution since it was ratified in 1789? This is very unusual in the history of nations.

France has had approximately 15 constitutions since the first one was ratified in 1791. Brazil has had seven since 1822. Poland has had six since 1919. Russia has had six since 1906. Germany has had four since 1849.

Except possibly for the Magna Carta, the United States Constitution is the most successful government/political document in the history of the world. It has been long-lasting and stable, with amendments added or repealed by a legal process in the document itself. It has not been overthrown. That cannot be said of many other nations.

In 1892 the United States Supreme Court declared America to be a Christian nation.

The first public schools in America were started so that children could be taught to read the Bible. The *New England Primer* was part of the curriculum in most early American public schools. Teachers used

it to teach reading to their students by having them read from the Scriptures of the Bible until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the curriculum gradually became more secular. Several of America's famous universities that exist to this day were started as Christian colleges, but have lost their Christian worldview. Among these are Harvard, Yale and Princeton.

At one time, the Bible held first place among America's public school literature. That is no longer the case, although some high schools offer "The Bible as Literature" as an elective.

One of America's lesser-known Founding Fathers was Fisher Ames. In 1788 he served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He became a member of the Convention from Massachusetts that ratified the U.S. Constitution in 1788. Ames fervently promoted continuing to use the Bible as the chief public school textbook even as other texts were brought into the school curriculum to supplement or replace it. He asked, "... Should not the Bible regain the place it once held as a school book?" This certainly points to a Christian worldview in America's earlier public

schools. Compare this to public education in America today.

Even President Woodrow Wilson, one of America's early "progressive" presidents, said, "A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we don't know where we have come from, or what we have been about."

Americans would do well to heed those words, and research our past history for themselves in the face of the revisionist history often taught in modern America.

For example, are the words "separation of Church and State" really in the U.S. Constitution? The first draft of the First Amendment to the Constitution stated, "Congress shall make no law establishing any religious denomination." The second draft stated, "Congress shall make no law establishing any particular religious denomination." The third draft stated, "Congress shall make no law in reference to other denominations." The fourth and final draft stated, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment or religion or

prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The Connecticut Baptist Association somehow got the impression that the U.S. government was going to name Congregationalism the national religion, and objected. In a private letter, Thomas Jefferson assured them there would be no national denomination so named. He used the phrase in his letter "separation of Church and State" came from. Jefferson's letter was written in 1802 after the Constitution was ratified. It had nothing to do with any First Amendment wording actually in the Constitution. That wording is not present anywhere in the Constitution.

Americans need to know their past history. Research it for yourselves in the face of the revisionist history often taught in America today. We have an obligation as Christians to pass our true history on to the next generation. We cannot do that unless we know it ourselves.

*Marion Clegg is an avid constitutionalist and attends Trinity Assembly of God in Hyde Park*

"Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

*George Washington (Farewell Address, 1796)*



What can I do?



*Faith without  
works is dead  
James 2:17*

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[www.christianactionministry.com](http://www.christianactionministry.com)

**As we turn over a new page in the leadership of the United States, the Christian Action Ministry is encouraged by the emphasis being placed on relying on God and following his word. The country is becoming more prolife, with a larger contingent of young Americans opposing abortion and top level leadership doing what it should be doing — leading. We look forward to seeing a prolife justice appointed to the Supreme Court, applaud the reinstatement of the Mexico City Policy, encourage the defunding of Planned Parenthood, and are thankful that President Trump is encouraging good relations with Israel and considering the relocation of our embassy to Jerusalem, its capitol. We are delighted that he is using Christian advisors and appointing Godly people to positions of authority.**

**As Christians we know one of our founding principles is “... freedom of religion”, not freedom from religion. Let us remember to pray for our President and our country and seek a return to Biblical principles as our guiding light.**

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### Next Meetings

March 14, 7:00 pm  
Parkinson home  
Hinesburg, Vt.  
April 11, 7:00 pm  
Parkinson home  
Hinesburg, Vt.

**Making A Difference  
In  
Vermont!**