

Christian Action Ministry Newsletter

Involving the Christian in Community Action

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Inside

Christians and the Loss of Free Speech and Freedom of Religion

By
Kay Trudell

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Are Christians losing their Constitutional free speech and religious rights and protections in the arena of higher education? According to Bradford Richardson, writing for The Washington Times on February 8, 2018, the answer is yes. Both Christians and conservatives appear to be losing their free speech rights in many venues, both public and private, across the United States. The trend is especially troubling on America's college campuses. According to Mr. Richardson, a century ago college professors and students zealously guarded the right to free expression and inquiry on campus. They were concerned that corporations and politicians (the government) would try to regulate or stifle free speech. They feared "outside forces" such as "meddlesome trustees, big business, and state legisla-

tures . . . were willing to invade the campus with their narrow and parochial views and shut down the free speech of academics . . . Most of us think that is no longer the great danger. The great danger is not

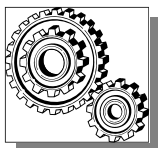


coming from outside of the university but from within."

Therefore, according to Richardson, the biggest threat to free speech and inquiry on college campuses is not outsiders, but the students and faculty of colleges and universities themselves who are persecuting and violating the free speech and academic rights of their fellow students and

professors, or even those of visitors on campus. Dr. David Horowitz (who is Jewish), the founder of The Freedom Center and an acknowledged expert on such matters, stated in a poll taken several years ago that only 11 percent of college professors are conservative. Colleges have set up the foundation for today's intolerant campus culture by systematically excluding, over time, almost all professors who are not secular liberals.

Richardson states: "Politicized student bodies and radicalized faculty have proved more than willing to disregard academic freedom in the name of *academic justice*, as one Harvard student put it. Polls have consistently shown that large pluralities, if not majorities, of students favor restricting free speech that is upsetting or offensive" to them --- as



In the Works

The Flood and Geologic Record

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.



"Free Speech in America is under increasing attack by some very intolerant people. In this case of discrimination, I find it highly ironic that after being booked to speak in the school's Constitution Hall, our constitutional right to free speech and the free exercise of religion, guaranteed under the First Amendment, have been denied." - Ken Ham, Creation Museum

defined by them.

Peter Wood, the president of the National Association of Scholars (NAS), said that today the biggest threat to freedom of speech comes from the students and leftist faculty themselves who have adopted the immature perspective that psychological safety from hearing viewpoints that they disagree with is more important than the ability to articulate arguments or listen to the other side in a sober, thoughtful manner.” That means someone else does not have the right to express a viewpoint not in agreement with that of the listener. And which students and faculty have their rights violated most often? Devout Christians, Jews, and conservatives.

Colleges and universities are supposed to exist for the purpose of the pursuit of truth. In America, that was once defined as coming from a Judeo-Christian worldview. That is no longer the case. In 1915, the American Association of University Professors presented a strong public position on academic freedom that bodies such as state legislatures and corporations and Boards were to respect. Approximately 100 years later, many of the professors who belong to that same

organization no longer believe what their own original statement says, and persecute both their fellow professors and their own students who deviate from what is considered “politically correct” speech and thought. Following their example, their students are now also doing this to fellow students. Such a movement has shown itself to be anti-Christian, anti-conservative, and anti-Israel. It is also a danger to our constitutional republic and the guarantees within the U.S. Constitution itself. Free speech and freedom of religion are two of the cornerstones these contemporary thought controllers reject. “Groupthink” reigns over individual freedom.

Why should we as American Christians care? First, because we should never turn a blind eye to persecution no matter its nature. Second, because Christian and conservative students attend those institutions of higher education, and are forced to endure such a stifling atmosphere. A few will struggle against it, but most will simply conform because their lives are thus made easier and their grades are not at risk. Third, public colleges and universities are supported by our tax dollars, and we should not be funding academic persecution. Fourth, the persecution is

now creeping beyond the campus and affecting members of the outside community.

The January-February 2018 edition of this CAM newsletter featured an article by Dick Trudell. He wrote about a recent visit he and his wife Kay took to the Creation Museum and the (Noah’s) Ark Encounter in Kentucky, explaining what a wonder and blessing the trip was. The gentleman who was instrumental in the construction and oversight of both was Dr. Ken Ham of the organization *Answers in Genesis (AiG)*. Ken Ham, a native of Australia, is a devout Christian and a Creationist who also happens to be a brilliant intellectual. He is the president and CEO of *Answers in Genesis USA* and the Creation Museum. His Bachelor’s Degree was in Applied Science with an emphasis on environmental biology. He also holds a Diploma of Education from the University of Queensland, and has been awarded two honorary Doctorates from Temple Baptist College and Liberty University. He is an internationally-known speaker and lecturer, has authored many books, and strives to teach the truth of Scripture in areas such as the Flood and Earth’s geology, dinosaurs, evolution vs. creation, secular worldview vs God’s Word, etc. He has

become one of the most sought-after speakers and guests not only in Christian venues, but on TV talk and news shows such as Fox’s *The O’Reilly Factor*, Fox and Friends in the Morning, CNN’s *The Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer*, ABC’s *Good Morning America*, CBS News Sunday Morning, the BBC, *NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams*, and *The PBS News Hour with Jim Lehrer*. In other words, Ken Ham is extremely credible, and comfortable moving in both the secular and Christian worlds.

Ken Ham was barred from a previously-arranged and scheduled speaking engagement at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) in February 2018 when a campus LGBT student group strenuously objected to his viewpoint being presented. The title of his talk was “Genesis and the State of the Culture.” Ironically, the presentation was to have been given in a building named Constitution Hall.

In an article posted on the *Answers in Genesis* website on February 6, 2018, authors Patrick Kanewske and Mark Looy wrote the article under the headline: “University Denies Free Speech to Ken Ham and Boots Him from Speaking”. They revealed that the *Answers in Genesis* President was “tossed from

“Academic freedom, in the first place, is the pursuit of truth . . .”

Peter Wood, President, National Association of Scholars

speaking in ironically named Constitution Hall.” They then went on to state: “Increasingly in the United States, religious freedom is being denied to Americans in their work place, at businesses, during public gatherings, and in holiday displays.” They reported that UCO “renege” on a contract it has already signed that allowed Dr. Ham to give his talk on March 5, 2018. When the local campus LGBT group saw the title and topic, they put pressure on the UCO Student Association president to cancel the speaking engagement. In his proposed talk, Ken would have discussed the two different worldviews and their starting points when interpreting scientific evidence, as he did in his famous debate four years ago with Bill (“the Science Guy”) Nye. The UCOSA caved in to the pressure from the LGBT group and rescinded Ken Ham’s invitation. The pressure was thought initially to have come from the tenured professor who is the sponsor of various LGBT clubs on campus. As was learned later, that professor rallied campus leftist support and put intense pressure on the UCOSA who eventually capitulated. Said Kanewske and Looy: “This is another case of bullying by those who decry intolerance.”

Rev. Paul Blair, pastor of

the Fairview Baptist Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, stepped up to the plate following this and invited Dr. Ham to do his presentation on March 5 at Blair’s church near the UCO campus. Who knows? Perhaps God will work all this for good. Let’s hope that the church is jammed with people on March 5. Pastor Blair explained in a public media release: “Since the doors of our public university are closed, we will open our (church) doors for interested students and members of our community to hear what Ken Ham has to share. I am greatly disappointed that a university that boasts of being ‘discrimination free’ on its website openly discriminates against the free speech rights of Christians on its campus.”

Ironically, the university allowed a Drag Queen Show which it sponsored and which received university funding. The university logo was even allowed to be placed on the show’s promotional materials. They also allowed a “Safe Sex Carnival”, where students were allowed to participate in games where they could throw dildos at cardboard cutouts of vaginas. Pastor Blair commented, “As we point out the obvious discrimination against Christianity on campus, I am also hoping to outrage the citizens of Oklahoma. Why are

our tax dollars being spent on this garbage? Where is the accountability and oversight of higher ed(ucation)? We are not Cal-Berkeley; we are Oklahoma . . . I am beside myself with frustration that our tax dollars go to promote a drag queen show and safe sex events with carnival games that are obscene and graphic, yet when it comes to something like debating Darwinian evolution or talking about the literal Creation account of Genesis --- well that kind of speech must be censored.”

Radio and Fox TV commentator Tod Starnes also weighed in on these events. “If the University of Central Oklahoma expects Christian students to be tolerant of LGBT-themed events, why aren’t they demanding that same expectation from LGBT students when it comes to Christian events?”

Pastor Blair also pointed out that the university is violating its own stated policy of being “committed to an inclusive learning environment” where all points of view and free expression and free inquiry are encouraged. “The University is a diverse community based on the free exchange of ideas.” But not, apparently, the ideas or worldview of Christians.

“Charting Academic Freedom,” a report issued on February 1, 2018 by the

NAS, came to the conclusion that the biggest threat to academic freedom (which includes free speech and religious freedom) on college campuses comes from the students and faculty themselves. To cite examples closer to home, protesting students and faculty at both Middlebury and Goddard Colleges in Vermont have forced invited conservative speakers off campus and caused the cancellation of their presentations within approximately the past two years.

Kanewske and Looy conclude: “Throughout its history, *Answers in Genesis* has come under attack for its Christian beliefs . . . The belief in ‘separation of church and state’ (a phrase found nowhere in the U.S. Constitution) has been used as a justification to eliminate Christianity from the public arena to be replaced by the anti-God religion of secular humanism. Continue to pray with us that the religious liberties of Americans will be protected and not eroded further. Pray for our leaders . . . as we are commanded to do in 1 Timothy 2, including those at universities as they consider policies which can undermine academic freedom.”

Kay Trudell is a Director of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Vibrant Church in South Burlington

Let God be true but every man a liar. - Romans 3:4 (NKJV)



What can I do?



*Faith without
works is dead
James 2:17*

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Breaking News

This issue was originally intended to continue the discussion of creation issues started in the last issue of this newsletter, particularly the Flood and the geologic record. However, the fact that in February 2018 Ken Ham from Answers in Genesis and the Creation Museum was not allowed to present creation vs. evolution on an American college campus (denying him his free speech due to LGBT complaints), was deemed to be an important heads-up to the Christian community. If Christians have to face having their Constitutional rights denied for political correctness or because some group is offended, our country has moved too far toward secularism and away from our founding principles.

The discussion on the Flood and the geologic record will appear in a later issue.

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Next Meetings

March 13, 7:00 pm
Parkinson home
Hinesburg, Vt.
April 10, 7:00 pm
Parkinson home
Hinesburg, Vt.

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In
Vermont!**