

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, October 17, 2025



Top News

- **How People Around the World View AI**
- **'In Guns We Trust' challenges white evangelicals to rethink their alliance with firearms**
- **8 facts about divorce in the United States**
- **In a shift, more Republicans now say calling people out on social media represents accountability**
- **Support for expanding nuclear power is up in both parties since 2020**

How People Around the World View AI

As the use of artificial intelligence (AI) increases rapidly, most people across 25 countries surveyed say they have heard or read at least a little about the technology.

And on balance, people are more concerned than excited about its growing presence in daily life.

A median of 34% of adults across these countries have heard or read a lot about AI, while 47% have heard a little and 14% say they've heard nothing at all, according to a spring 2025 Pew Research Center survey.

But many are worried about AI's effects on daily life. A median of 34% of adults say they are more concerned than excited about the increased use of AI, while 42% are equally concerned and excited. A median of 16% are more excited than concerned.

Concerns about AI are especially common in the United States, Italy, Australia, Brazil and Greece, where about half of adults say they are more concerned than excited. But as few as 16% in South Korea are mainly concerned about the prospect of AI in their lives...

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'In Guns We Trust' challenges white evangelicals to rethink their alliance with firearms

Pastor Philip Thornton strode onto the platform of his Legacy Faith Church in Susquehanna Township, Pennsylvania, on Sept. 28 with an AR-15-style rifle strapped to his chest, an American flag emblazoned on the magazine.

"There's nothing in it, praise the Lord," Thornton told worshippers. "So, fear not, everybody. Praise the Lord if that was your concern."

Thornton was using the unloaded weapon as a sermon illustration. At points, he hoisted it up and pointed it at his congregation.

Veteran reporter William J. Kole called the incident alarming, but not surprising. He's spent the last year researching some Christians' embrace of gun rights for his new book, "In Guns We Trust: The Unholy Trinity of White Evangelicals, Politics, and Firearms," released Oct. 14 by Broadleaf Books.

RNS spoke with Kole about why he doesn't think guns belong in church, why some evangelicals are so enthusiastic about gun ownership and what he believes is at stake in gun reform debates. The interview has been edited for length and clarity...

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8 facts about divorce in the United States

Divorce is an important aspect of family life in the United States that shapes living arrangements, financial well-being and parenting. In 2023, over 1.8 million Americans divorced. Additionally, a third of Americans who have ever been married have also experienced divorce.

Many adults who divorce go on to form new families through cohabitation, remarriage or having more children. For instance, most adults who have divorced (66%) have gone on to remarry. And among those who have divorced and are currently remarried, 46% have had a child with their new spouse.

Here are eight facts about divorce in the United States, based on a Pew Research Center analysis of federal data.

1. Divorce has been declining since the early 1980s, according to a measure known as the refined divorce rate.

The refined divorce rate is the number of divorces divided by the number of married women ages 15 and older, multiplied by 1,000. This rate differs from the overall divorce rate, which measures divorces per 1,000 women, regardless of marital status.

We use the refined divorce rate because it accounts for changes in the number of people who are married at any given time. This is especially important as marriage rates have declined in recent decades.

The refined divorce rate in the U.S. peaked around 1980, at 22.6 divorces per 1,000 married women, before falling slightly to 20.5 in 2008. It has fallen more sharply in the past 15 years, to 14.4 divorces per 1,000 married women in 2023...

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In a shift, more Republicans now say calling people out on social media represents accountability



A majority of U.S. adults (56%) say that those who call out others on social media for posts that might be considered offensive are mainly holding people accountable for their actions. A smaller share (40%) say those who do this are more likely to punish people who didn't deserve it.

Both in 2022 and 2020, Democrats were more likely than Republicans to see users posting these callouts as mainly holding people accountable. Today, however, the partisan gap in these views has essentially disappeared. Views have shifted in both parties – with the starkest change among Republicans.

Among Republicans

Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are more likely than they were in 2022 to view calling people out on social media as accountability (56% today, up from 34% then). At that time, Republicans largely saw this behavior as unjust punishment (62% then, vs. 41% today).

Among Democrats

Today, 59% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say those who call out others are holding people accountable for their actions, down from 65% in 2022 and 75% in 2020. In turn, the share of Democrats who view calling people out on social media as unjust punishment has risen to 38% from 32% in 2022 and 22% in 2020....

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Support for expanding nuclear power is up in both parties since 2020

About six-in-ten U.S. adults now say they favor more nuclear power plants to generate electricity, according to a Pew Research Center survey fielded in April and May. That's up from 43% in 2020, driven by increasing support among both Republicans and Democrats.

The Trump administration and Democrats and Republicans in Congress support expanding nuclear power. The second Trump administration has issued four executive orders aimed at dramatically increasing the United States's nuclear capacity. And a major law President Donald Trump signed in July 2025 preserved many tax incentives for nuclear power.

Americans remain more likely to favor expanding solar (77%) and wind power (68%) than nuclear power (59%). But while support for solar and wind power has declined by double digits since 2020 – largely driven by drops in Republican support – the share who favor nuclear power has grown by 16 percentage points since then...



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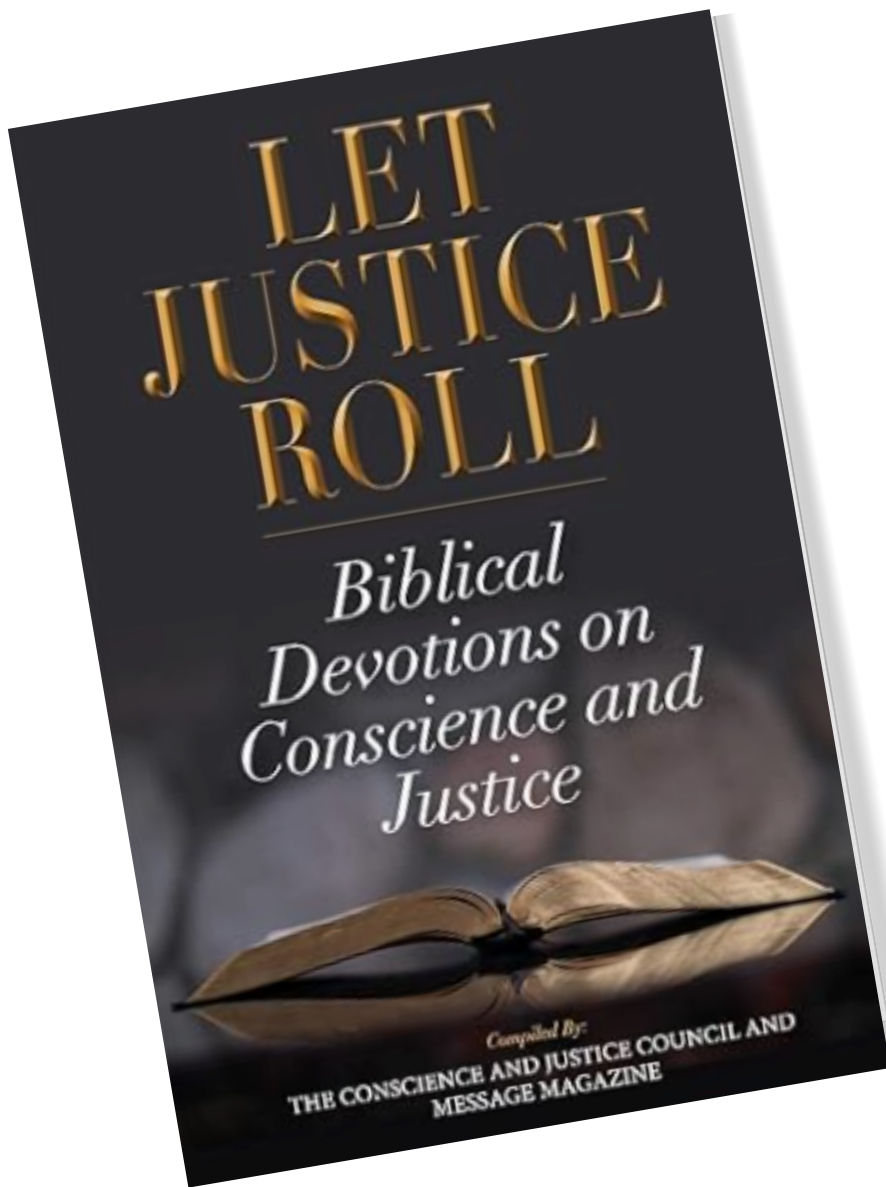
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Let Justice Roll: Biblical Devotions on Conscience and Justice

"Let Justice Roll" is a compelling devotional that walks the reader through 365 days of biblical insights in freedom of conscience, and social justice. This compilation of articles represents the work of a nationwide network of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) advocates and other connected community activists.

The components of conscience and justice ministry include conscience, discipleship, engagement, fellowship, the power of the Holy Spirit, love, and prophecy. This is a must-read book for all followers of Christ and those who seek spiritual growth. Get ready to explore the profound biblical insights in this masterful book.

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This newsletter aims to highlight news articles relating to religious liberty, civil rights, and social justice. The Conscience & Justice Council desires to be attuned with society so that we may change the nation by impacting one community at a time. Articles linked above are meant to provoke thought and discussion on important topics, and do not always express options or views endorsed by the CJC.

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