

Something to Pray About

By Cindy Sears – August 2010

“ONLY SEMANTICS?”

“The only thing required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing.” (origin unknown)

Lately, government leaders and representatives have begun to replace the phrase *freedom of religion* with the phrase *freedom of worship*. Are these just two ways of saying the same thing, or is something more subtle and ominous going on here?

“End Times” authors, Tim LaHaye and Craig Parshall, have warned that “the phrase *freedom of worship* follows an international concept that departs from the United States’ First Amendment understanding of religious freedom. Under international law... ‘worship’ is a limited right, and connotes activities within a church body, but can exclude public evangelism.” Personal witnessing, public prayer and preaching, and refusal to participate in activities that are against one’s religious beliefs are not protected under *freedom of worship* law.

Although, you are unlikely to hear of these cases on the evening news, Christian charity workers in several countries (India, for example) have been deported under *freedom of worship* laws, even though they strictly complied with rules against evangelism, or display of Christian symbols or presence of Bibles in the places where they were ministering to the sick, the poor, or orphans.



“Article 9 of the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms allows evangelism to be banned on the basis of protecting ‘public order.’” This same attitude toward Christians has already seeped into our country. A small group of students and their teacher, who were praying quietly on the steps of the Supreme Court building, were accosted by a police officer and told that what they were doing was violating a federal statute and they had to do their praying elsewhere. Alliance Defense Fund attorney Nate Kellum says “that the officer’s actions were patently unconstitutional and argues that ‘Christians should not be silenced for exercising their beliefs through quiet prayer on public property.’”

(See www.onenewsnow.com/Culture/Default.aspx?id=1091260.)

Another case that should cause Christians grave concerns involves an Augusta State University graduate counseling program student who has been threatened with expulsion if she does not change her Christian beliefs. The student believes that homosexuality is a ‘lifestyle’ choice and not a ‘state of being.’ She also has affirmed that a person is born either male or female and this is not a “social construct or individual choice subject to alteration by the person.” Both of these viewpoints go against the secular belief that asserts that “sexual orientation is not a lifestyle or choice, but a state of being.” (See www.christianpost.com/article/20100722.)

Do not expect our religious freedoms to be taken away from us in one fell swoop. That’s not the way Satan works. It will be a subtle shift here and then there and then, one day; we will wake up to a world without the freedom to practice our faith anywhere but inside a church building—if even there. The slippery slope is getting wetter every day. We need to speak up and stand up now before it’s too late.