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CHRISTIAN LAW
ASSOCIATION 
EMAIL ALERT



Will the Next Generation have the Same Freedom?

There was a time when churches did not have to think about their freedoms—they simply lived them. Ministry was not something that required careful legal consideration or measured hesitation. Churches opened their doors, planned outreaches, disciplined believers, and proclaimed the Gospel without wondering whether those activities might be questioned or challenged. It was understood that this was the natural and protected work of the church. For many, that memory still feels recent. Yet across the country, a growing number of pastors and ministry leaders are beginning to sense that something has shifted. Not in ways that always draw public attention, but in quieter, more subtle ways that are becoming increasingly familiar—moments of uncertainty, questions that did not used to arise, and situations that require more careful navigation than before.

At Christian Law Association, these moments are not theoretical—they are heard every day through the voices of pastors and church leaders seeking guidance. A pastor may call after receiving a notice from a local official questioning whether a ministry activity complies with local regulations. Another church may be unsure how to proceed with a new outreach effort that, in years past, would have been undertaken without hesitation. A Christian school may be working through how to uphold its Biblical convictions while responding to outside pressures that challenge its policies. Each situation is unique, yet together they reflect a broader reality—one that is developing steadily and deserves thoughtful attention. These are not isolated concerns, but part of a pattern that reveals how the environment in which churches operate is gradually changing.

This leads us to a question that is both simple and deeply significant: will the next generation have the same freedom we have known? It is a question that extends beyond current circumstances and reaches into the future of ministry itself. Scripture reminds us that what is not intentionally preserved is often quietly lost. In Judges 2:10, we read of a generation that arose which **“knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”** That did not happen suddenly, nor was it the result of a single decision. It was the result of something not being

faithfully carried forward. In much the same way, the freedoms that allow churches to operate, teach, and minister are not self-sustaining. They are not preserved simply because they existed in the past. They require awareness, stewardship, and continued faithful use.

One of the greatest challenges in recognizing this shift is that it rarely happens all at once. Instead, it unfolds gradually—often so gradually that it can be difficult to identify in the moment. A small concern raised here, a request for change there, a moment of hesitation that replaces what was once confidence. Individually, these situations may seem minor or manageable, and in many cases they are. But over time, they begin to shape the way churches think and operate. Ministries that once moved forward without question may begin to pause. Outreach efforts may be reconsidered. Leaders may find themselves asking not only what is right, but what is allowed. And when uncertainty begins to influence action, it can quietly limit what is done.

This is how freedom can be eroded—not through one defining moment, but through a series of smaller ones that, taken together, create a different environment. It is not always the presence of direct opposition that changes things, but the gradual introduction of uncertainty that leads to caution replacing confidence. When churches begin to step back—not out of conviction, but out of concern—the effect is cumulative. Over time, what was once freely exercised becomes less visible, less frequent, and ultimately less understood. And what is not consistently practiced becomes more vulnerable to restriction.

What is at stake in these moments is not limited to present challenges. It is the future of how ministry will function in the years to come. It is whether churches will continue to gather without interference, whether Christian schools will be able to teach Biblical truth without compromise, whether pastors can counsel individuals with clarity and confidence, and whether ministries can continue reaching their communities openly and effectively. These are not distant or abstract concerns—they are being shaped right now, through the decisions churches are making and the guidance they are seeking in real time.

Psalm 78:4 reminds us of the responsibility that rests on each generation: **“We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord.”** There is a clear call not only to believe and to serve, but to ensure that what has been entrusted is passed forward intact. That responsibility extends beyond doctrine into the practical ability to live out and proclaim that truth. The freedoms that make ministry possible are part of that stewardship. They are not ends in themselves, but they are essential tools that allow the work of the Lord to continue unhindered.

This is where the work of Christian Law Association becomes so vital. Each call received is more than a question—it is a moment where a ministry is choosing how it will move forward. Churches are not looking to create conflict or draw attention; they are simply seeking to continue faithfully. They want to understand how to respond wisely, how to proceed with confidence, and how to ensure that their ministry remains both protected and effective. CLA comes alongside these churches in those moments, providing guidance that is rooted in both legal understanding and a deep appreciation for ministry. In doing so, it helps churches continue their work—not with fear, but with clarity.

Much of this work happens quietly. Situations are resolved without public attention. Questions are answered, and ministries move forward, often without others ever knowing what was at stake. Yet those quiet resolutions carry significant weight. Each one represents a moment where a church chose to continue rather than withdraw, to seek wisdom rather than remain uncertain, and to stand in a way that preserves not only its own ministry, but the broader ability of others to do the same.

Galatians 5:1 provides a clear and steady instruction: **“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.”** This is not a call to react with fear or to become defensive. It is a call to remain steady, faithful, and grounded. To continue doing what is right with wisdom and confidence. To recognize that standing is not always dramatic, but it is always important. It is found in the consistent,

thoughtful decisions that allow ministry to move forward even when circumstances become more complex.

The freedoms we enjoy today are a gift, but they are also a responsibility. They have been preserved through the faithfulness of those who came before us, and they are now entrusted to us to steward wisely. What we do with them—how we use them, how we respond when they are questioned, and whether we choose to continue faithfully—will shape what the next generation inherits. May we be found faithful in that responsibility, not only for the sake of ministry today, but for those who will follow us in ministering tomorrow. So that the next generation