



THE LEGAL ALERT

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW ASSOCIATION

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A STAGGERING REMINDER: THE HATRED OF GOD'S WORD IS ON THE RISE IN AMERICA

When the Christian Law Association recently posted a message publicly—beyond its normal audience of supporters and followers—the response was eye-opening. While many Christians were encouraged and thankful for the ministry's stand, the sheer flood of hateful comments directed against God, the Bible, and those who love Him was absolutely staggering. It wasn't a small handful of critics; it was an overwhelming outpouring of anger and hostility toward even the mention of Jesus Christ.

This experience is a sobering reminder of the spiritual climate in America today. Many of us, faithfully attending our churches and surrounded by fellow believers, can begin to feel insulated from the growing opposition to Christianity in our culture. We live and serve in communities where the Bible is respected, where prayer is normal, and where faith in God is woven into the fabric of daily life. But the reality outside those circles is very different. There is a deepening resentment toward God's Word and those who stand for Biblical truth.

As Christians, we must not let this discourage us but rather drive us to our knees in prayer. America desperately needs revival.



PRAY FOR THE FIGHT TO PRESERVE OUR RIGHT TO WITNESS

CLA is following several ongoing pieces of legislation that raise concerns for churches and Christians alike. While framed as promoting public order, portions of the language in this legislation could be interpreted to restrict open-air preaching, public witnessing, and even the distribution of Gospel tracts and pamphlets in certain settings.

Such legal challenges are surfacing all across America. The Christian Law Association is actively preparing for upcoming issues in states like North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and California. Each case represents a critical stand to ensure that believers retain the right to fulfill the Great Commission in their communities. As Acts 5:29 declares, "We ought to obey God

The angry words and vicious attacks we see are not just against us—they are against the Savior we serve. Our response must be one of love, truth, and unwavering commitment to intercede for those who oppose the Gospel. Scripture reminds us that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12), but it also reminds us to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you" (Matthew 5:44).

This moment should shake us out of complacency. It should remind us that our nation's spiritual battle is very real, and the need for Christians to stand boldly and pray fervently has never been greater. Let us pray for America, for our leaders, and even for those who are hostile to the Gospel—that their hearts might be softened and turned to Christ. May we refuse to retreat into silence and instead continue to let our light shine in a world that desperately needs it.

CLA staff member, Dr. Steve Kluth, presents our ministry in churches across America.



rather than men." If we lose these freedoms, our ability to share the Gospel in public spaces may be severely hindered for future generations.

We urge Christians everywhere to pray fervently for these legal battles. The freedom to hand out a tract, share a Bible verse, or speak the name of Jesus on a street corner is not merely a cultural right—it is a God-given command. As Mark 16:15 reminds us, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Let's ask the Lord for wisdom for our attorneys, courage for those facing opposition, and His mighty hand of protection over our constitutional freedoms. The time to pray and act is now.

LEGAL QUESTIONS, PRAYER REQUESTS, OR DONATIONS
CALL 888-252-1969 OR VISIT WWW.CHRISTIANLAW.ORG

START-UP GUIDE FOR MINISTRY VEHICLES



Bus ministries are vital. They have been responsible for bringing millions of children to Christ over many decades in America, children who likely might otherwise have never seen the inside of a church. We strongly believe that if any church has the resources and manpower to operate some aspect of a vehicle ministry, then it is absolutely something they should prayerfully consider.

At the same time, vehicle ministries are legal landmines fraught with extreme liability. No other aspect of your ministry can place so many lives at risk—even if the driver is virtually perfect. Because of this, never cut corners with your vehicle ministry! Please remember the following important information as your church serves others through this much-needed outreach.

1. Federal law regulates the use of Commercial Motor Vehicles.

Definition. A Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV), is a vehicle used on a highway, in interstate commerce, that, (1) is designed to transport 8 or more passengers (including the driver) for compensation, or 16 or more passengers (including the driver) not for compensation, or, (2) has a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,001 pounds or more.

If your ministry operates a CMV, such as a school bus, you must comply with federal regulations. This means you need to know and comply with all regulations regarding Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs), as well as the regulations regarding drug and alcohol testing.

If your ministry uses a vehicle designed to transport 15 or fewer people (including the driver) not for compensation, you are exempt from these requirements. If your ministry can effectively operate vehicles of this size, it may be less expensive to use them instead of being subjected to the expenses associated with alcohol and drug testing.

2. Every CMV driver is subject to federal law requirements.

Regardless of whether you ever cross a state line, every driver with a CDL who operates one of your CMVs is subject to federal requirements, including proper pre-employment screening, multiple alcohol and drug testing requirements, proper training, and the driver's requirement to notify you of any traffic citation other than a parking violation.

These regulations are extensive, and they can change! Because of their complexity, it is very difficult for any

ministry to know for sure if they are fully compliant with the law. At CLA, we believe there is great wisdom in finding an outside company that specializes in driver training and CMV/CDL compliance so you can be sure you are meeting all federal regulations.

3. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) can also apply.

If your ministry vehicle is designed to transport more than 15 passengers (including the driver) and goes out of state even one time, then Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations can apply to your vehicles. These regulations are extensive and include vehicle registration and marking, driver qualifications, vehicle maintenance and inspections, and record-keeping requirements.

Software designed to assist with FMCSR recordkeeping requirements can be purchased, and it would likely be worth the investment. There are also companies that specialize in FMCSR compliance that can assist your ministry in following all of these regulations.

4. Avoid 15-passenger vans if possible.

While advancement in safety technologies, particularly Electronic Stability Control, have made 15-passenger vans safer today than they were in years past, they are still more prone to rollovers than practically any other vehicle. So many safety advisories have been issued regarding this risk in 15-passenger vans that insurance companies generally charge more to cover these vans, and lawsuits over rollover accidents are all but guaranteed. Additionally, some states restrict the use of 15-passenger vans as school transportation.

At the very least, contact your insurance company first for their advice and policy requirements before ever considering purchasing a 15-passenger van or accepting one as a gift. If at all possible, we recommend purchasing a different type of vehicle, such as a minibus.

5. Maintain adequate insurance coverage.

The majority of states have incredibly low legal minimums for automobile insurance coverage, but that does not mean your ministry should ever consider carrying those minimums. Maintaining sufficient insurance coverage is essential. CLA recommends that you have an automobile policy with at least one million dollars in coverage, and even more if your ministry can afford it.

It is vital to sit down with your insurance agent and specify all of your planned uses for your ministry vehicles. This ensures the agent will offer your ministry all appropriate coverages as well as helping to avoid the insurance company denying coverage later.

6. Add the vehicle ministry into the church's annual budget.

A successful and legally safe vehicle ministry is not cheap. Don't skimp on vehicles, insurance, or routine maintenance. Follow all maintenance recommendations meticulously. If an accident is caused by a malfunctioning part—and it turns out that your ministry had the option to change it and chose not to—that choice can result in severe adverse consequences if you are ever in a lawsuit.

START-UP GUIDE FOR MINISTRY VEHICLES CONTINUED...

7. Choose your drivers carefully.

Your drivers are not just volunteers or employees. They potentially hold the entire future of your ministry in their hands. Remember that whoever you choose to drive is the person responsible for keeping more than a dozen people alive at any one time. In addition to requiring drivers to meet basic federal requirements, do not be afraid to limit drivers to those who seem to have the experience or maturity necessary for such an important role.

FIVE BENCHMARKS OF A SALTY CHRISTIAN



At the time in history when Matthew 5:13 was penned, salt was infinitely more valuable than gold, partly because of its preservative abilities. God says in this verse that, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”

As children of God, by the divine appointment of God, we are the salt of the earth. And God says He has a special function for us as salt. How salty are you today, Christian?

If you use bad salt in an effort to preserve, decay and rot will set in. Verse 13 is clear; salt that has lost its savor becomes useless. If we want to be the salt God desires us to be, He has five commands for us, found in 2 Chronicles 7:14—“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” In this verse, we find the five benchmarks of salty Christians.

First, we must be called by His name. When the world looks at your life, would they call you by His name or would you have to tell the world that you are a Christian? In John 13:34, Jesus says if we want the whole world to know who we belong to, it begins with loving the way we have been loved.



Dr. David C. Gibbs, Jr.

The second command is that we humble ourselves.

James 4 is clear that we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. The opposite of humility is pride—and we are either humble or proud. There is no middle ground. And the Bible tells us in both James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 that God resists the proud. If we are proud, we have God opposing us—which makes humbling ourselves so critical. When God gave us the seven sins that He particularly hates and despises, pride made the list.

The third condition if we are to be salt in the world is to pray. God says we have not because we ask not. He tells us that nothing is impossible with Him—but that hinges on us asking. And we can ask God for as many miracles as we want in our lifetime—there is no limit! What’s on your list of impossible asks today?

Fourth, we must seek His face. When is the last time you went to the Lord just to get Him? Not to get something from Him—but to get Him? Too often we want something from God’s hand, but we don’t want His face.

The fifth requirement is that we must turn from our wicked ways. The problem is not sin with our leaders, or sin among those we know. It’s sin in our own lives. But when we turn from our wicked ways, God moves. We must not just pray to be cleaner...but to be clean. 1 John 1:9 promises that we can be cleansed from all unrighteousness. When God’s people get clean and then they pray, that is when “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Do we truly want to see what God can do? God wants us to be the salt! And if we will be the salt, He will do miracles for His honor and glory when we ask.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM A PRAYER SUPPORTER

I really do appreciate the ministry of CLA. Reading the prayer requests and the issues involved, it is obvious that our culture hates believers and wants to get rid of us. It is beyond understanding how this could take place. I can remember many slogans when I was young that had to do with freedom and responsibility and law and order. If it weren’t for CLA and other Christian law ministries, we would be so much worse off. Thank you for all you do, as you are severely needed. Love and prayers for all of you at CLA. —J. M. in Texas



PRAYER CHECKLIST

We covet your prayers for these requests and hundreds of others we receive regularly.

- ✓ **ALABAMA:** Pray for a Christian business owner who contacted CLA for guidance after a city ordinance required the removal of Scripture verses from her shop windows.
- ✓ **ALASKA:** Pray for a Christian nurse who contacted CLA after being told to remove her cross necklace while on duty.
- ✓ **ARIZONA:** Pray for a Christian high school student threatened with suspension for wearing a shirt with a Bible verse.
- ✓ **ARKANSAS:** Pray for a pastor who reached out for help after a city council blocked his church's effort to distribute Gospel tracts at a public parade.
- ✓ **CALIFORNIA:** Pray for a church facing legal challenges for refusing to rent its fellowship hall for an event that violates their doctrinal beliefs.
- ✓ **COLORADO:** Pray for a Christian photographer seeking legal protection after declining to participate in a ceremony that contradicts her faith.
- ✓ **CONNECTICUT:** Pray for a Bible club leader who was told the club can no longer meet on school property during after-school hours.
- ✓ **DELAWARE:** Pray for a Christian teacher who requested guidance after being instructed to avoid mentioning her faith in classroom discussions.
- ✓ **FLORIDA:** Pray for a church daycare program threatened with closure for including Bible lessons in their curriculum.
- ✓ **GEORGIA:** Pray for a Christian doctor facing pressure to provide treatments that go against his religious convictions.
- ✓ **HAWAII:** Pray for a Christian tour guide who was reprimanded for answering a religious question during a break at work.
- ✓ **IDAHO:** Pray for a Christian counselor who contacted CLA after being reported to a licensing board for sharing Biblical truths with a client.
- ✓ **ILLINOIS:** Pray for a Christian student punished for distributing religious bookmarks on campus during finals week.
- ✓ **INDIANA:** Pray for a Christian employee disciplined for refusing to participate in a workplace celebration contrary to his convictions.
- ✓ **IOWA:** Pray for a youth pastor who reached out after the school district barred him from volunteering due to his church affiliation.
- ✓ **KANSAS:** Pray for a Christian student group seeking legal advice after their Bible study was banned from meeting in a public library room.
- ✓ **KENTUCKY:** Pray for a church choir leader who contacted CLA after being told the choir could not sing hymns at a community gathering.
- ✓ **LOUISIANA:** Pray for a pastor navigating defamation concerns after local newspapers implied his church taught intolerance.
- ✓ **MAINE:** Pray for a Christian baker threatened with legal action for declining to create a cake with a message opposing Biblical values.
- ✓ **MARYLAND:** Pray for a church that is being fined for holding worship services in a residential home.
- ✓ **MASSACHUSETTS:** Pray for a Christian parent advocating for her child's right to opt out of certain public school activities conflicting with their faith.

- ✓ **MICHIGAN:** Pray for a college professor who was denied tenure after expressing Biblical viewpoints during a campus forum.
- ✓ **MINNESOTA:** Pray for a Christian nonprofit leader whose organization lost its tax-exempt status after distributing Bibles to prisoners.
- ✓ **MISSISSIPPI:** Pray for a Christian youth leader who was removed from coaching duties for hosting an optional team Bible study.
- ✓ **MISSOURI:** Pray for a pastor who contacted CLA after his church was denied a lease for office space due to its religious nature.
- ✓ **MONTANA:** Pray for a pastor seeking advice following complaints that a church puppet ministry promoted religious views in a public school program.
- ✓ **NEBRASKA:** Pray for a Christian who asked CLA for help after being denied a zoning permit for a backyard chapel on personal property.
- ✓ **NEVADA:** Pray for a church volunteer who reached out after being reprimanded for offering prayer to fellow volunteers at a community food pantry.
- ✓ **NEW HAMPSHIRE:** Pray for a pastor who sought counsel regarding restrictions on running RV worship services at a state park.
- ✓ **NEW JERSEY:** Pray for a Christian police officer disciplined for reading a Psalm before a shift with fellow officers.
- ✓ **NEW MEXICO:** Pray for a church meeting planner who contacted CLA after a venue refused to host a prayer breakfast.
- ✓ **NEW YORK:** Pray for a pastor navigating an accusation that singing hymns in public violates noise ordinances.
- ✓ **NORTH CAROLINA:** Pray for a Christian counselor disciplined after sharing Biblical principles with a school group on stress management.
- ✓ **OHIO:** Pray for a college student seeking advice after being dropped for distributing Gospel pamphlets on campus.
- ✓ **OKLAHOMA:** Pray for a pastor who received a letter warning his church about political speech at worship services.
- ✓ **OREGON:** Pray for a Christian social worker who sought counsel after being told to stop mentioning her faith in counseling sessions.
- ✓ **PENNSYLVANIA:** Pray for a church librarian who contacted CLA after being asked to remove religious books from a public library event.
- ✓ **RHODE ISLAND:** Pray for a pastor facing pushback for conducting baptisms in a public beach area without a permit.
- ✓ **SOUTH CAROLINA:** Pray for a Christian volunteer who reached out regarding a city ordinance prohibiting faith-based banners at public events.
- ✓ **SOUTH DAKOTA:** Pray for a church member requiring assistance after being asked to remove a "WWJD" bracelet at a state-run youth camp.
- ✓ **TENNESSEE:** Pray for a pastor seeking legal advice after local officials denied his church permission to livestream worship from a public park.
- ✓ **TEXAS:** Pray for a Christian high school coach who contacted CLA after being reprimanded for kneeling in prayer with his team.

- ✓ **UTAH:** Pray for a church stakeholder seeking guidance after the park service rescinded a permit to host an interfaith prayer gathering.
- ✓ **VERMONT:** Pray for a pastor who requested counsel after his church's newsletter was rejected by a local paper for being "too religious."
- ✓ **VIRGINIA:** Pray for a Christian bookstore owner who was fined for publicly displaying Bible-themed art without a commercial license.
- ✓ **WASHINGTON:** Pray for a church videographer who reached out after county officials removed streaming equipment from a public building.
- ✓ **WEST VIRGINIA:** Pray for a weekend service leader needing assistance after the highway department restricted road signs guiding attendees to church.
- ✓ **WISCONSIN:** Pray for a Christian homeschool cooperative seeking direction after the state revoked their tax-exempt status over religious content.
- ✓ **WYOMING:** Pray for a pastor seeking counsel after his church was denied permission to run a mobile food ministry on state property.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS—CROSS-STATE ISSUES

- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for pastors nationwide facing threats due to social media posts.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for marketplace believers requesting legal help after being disciplined for praying at work.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for military chaplains seeking freedom after being warned not to distribute religious literature to service members.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for wedding chapels facing fines for refusing to host ceremonies inconsistent with Biblical marriage.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for Christian athletes who are disciplined for praying on the court or field.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for college professors targeted over including Biblical worldview material in required courses.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for church planters caught in zoning battles in rapidly growing cities.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for youth ministries facing challenges to hosting summer camps on public property.
- ✓ **NATIONAL:** Pray for Christian festival organizers affected by new permit requirements targeting faith events.

A MINISTRY OF LEGAL HELPS



Since 1969, CLA has been providing free legal assistance to Bible-believing churches and Christians who are experiencing difficulty in practicing their religious faith because of governmental regulation, intrusion, or prohibition in one form or another. The Christian Law Association serves in the following ways...

- Free legal defense of those facing difficulties for the Biblical faith
- Free legal counsel to churches and Christians for their ministries
- Free legal help to homeschooling families
- Publication of *The Legal Alert*, a monthly newsletter
- Legal books and other resources to inform Christians of their rights
- Preaching in churches across the country
- Intercessory prayer ministry for requests sent to the ministry offices
- Free legal consulting to local, state, and federal officials and legislators to provide maximum religious liberty
- Prayer initiative for our national leadership and government
- Legal seminars for ministries to help prevent lawsuits
- Weekday radio program broadcast, *The Legal Alert*, on 1,600 outlets around the world.



WHY LAWS BUILD ON LAWS—AND WHY WE MUST STAND NOW

It's often said that freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. Nowhere is that more true than in the area of religious liberty. The laws being passed today—and the court rulings handed down—don't exist in a vacuum. Each one becomes a building block for the future. What our nation tolerates now will be entrenched in policy tomorrow. And what becomes entrenched will shape the freedoms—or the restrictions—our grandchildren will face.

As Christians, we cannot afford to take a passive view of today's challenges. A small compromise now often leads to greater losses later. When churches lose zoning rights, when business owners are forced to violate their convictions, or when prayer is silenced in the public square, those precedents don't disappear—

they lay the foundation for even more severe restrictions in the years ahead.

This is why the fight for religious liberty isn't just about our comfort or rights in the present. It's about preserving a legacy of freedom for future generations. Proverbs 13:22 reminds us, "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children." The spiritual inheritance we leave must include the ability to live out and share our faith freely.

We must remain vigilant, prayerful, and active, using the opportunities God has given us to protect the liberties that have allowed the Gospel to spread so freely in America. If we don't stand today, we may be asking our grandchildren to stand in a much darker and harder day.