

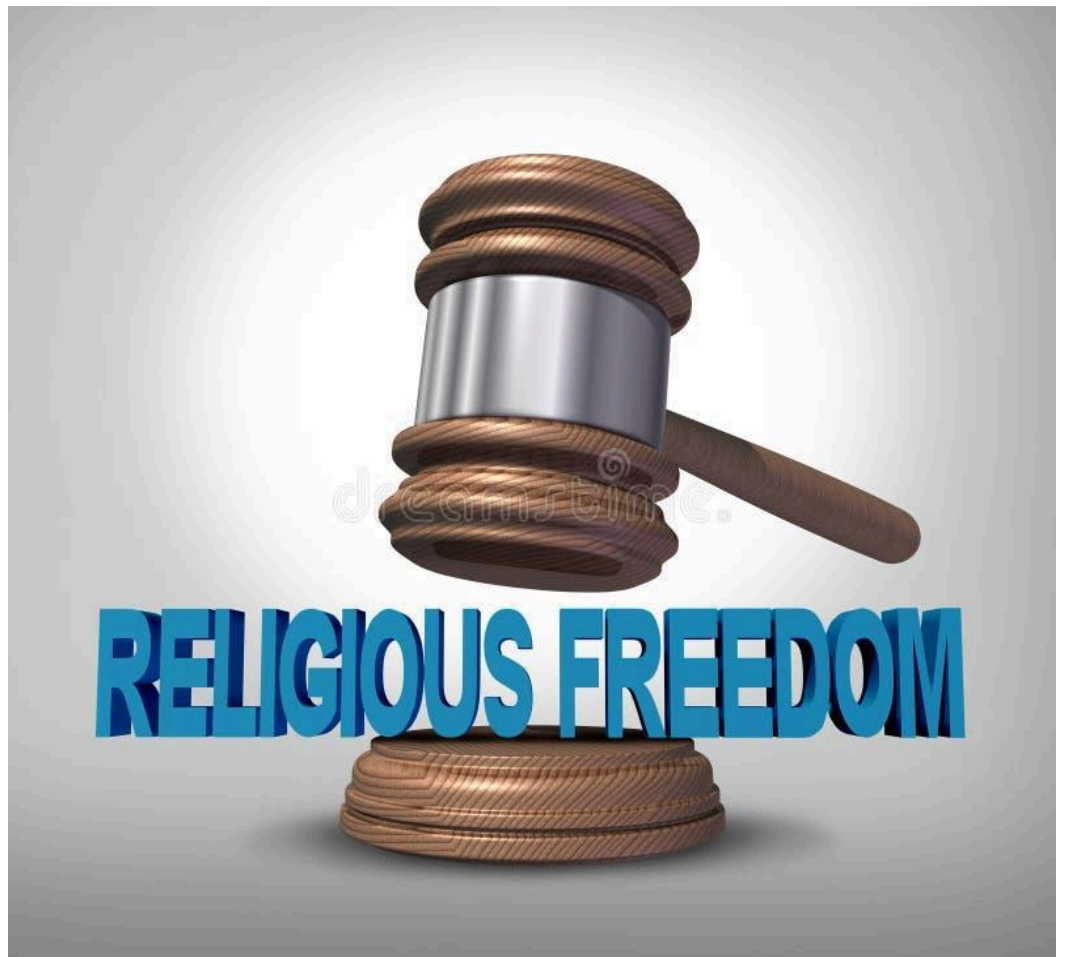
Volume I | Issue 5
May 1, 2026

Religious Liberty Update

Reflection “Choose you this day whom ye will serve...” — Joshua 24:15 (KJV)

“What Kind of Jesus Do We Serve?”

"Religious Liberty encompasses many things. Ultimately, true Religious Liberty, or at least the belief in and practice of true Religious Liberty, allows both us and those we come into contact with, to prepare for the second coming of Jesus and eternal life with Him. So, this is the question that each of us must answer.



What Kind of Jesus Do We Serve?

It seems these days that a great many people in America want to serve Jesus. That's great! As a person who has given Bible studies, I'm thrilled at the heightened interest in our Saviour!

Even in my own personal life, I am experiencing a more intense desire for a deeper personal relationship with our Lord. No doubt many of you reading this article can say the same. Praise God for His leading through the Holy Spirit in providing our Sabbath School Quarterly for this second quarter: "Growing in a Relationship with God"!

Having said that, have you noticed something? It seems that our elected leaders, from the President down through our state and local leaders, are seemingly promoting a "Jesus" that is difficult, if not impossible to find in Scripture. While they may not be directly promoting Jesus a certain way, their attitudes and actions certainly are.

So, what kind of Jesus do the Scriptures paint a picture of? Is he the physically fit, loud, aggressive Messiah who is intolerant of sin and sinners? Is He the pale skinned, "Casper milk toast", soft spoken, meekness-is-weakness type who not only loves sinners, but the sin they engage in as well? Realizing that I may well have opened a can of worms here, let's see if Scripture can quickly point us in the right direction.

As far as Jesus' physical appearance is concerned, I've only come across one verse that even closely touches on the topic: Isaiah 53:2. In it we read: "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." – Isa. 53:2 KJV.

While this passage doesn't say very much about what Jesus physically looked like at all, the most profound statement made here may well be what it doesn't say! It doesn't say if He was muscular, average, or skinny. It doesn't say if He was handsome or ugly (though it does say that He had no beauty). It doesn't even say if He was black, white, red, brown, or any other color (some theologians have postured that, when you look at a root taken out of the ground, it certainly ISN'T white). That seems to dispatch with the physical traits of our Lord.

Now, what about His emotions and character? Frankly, it seems that the entire Bible is a dissertation on the character of Jesus. That only makes sense since He, through the Holy Spirit, is its Author! For the sake of brevity and conciseness, perhaps a

quick run through Matthew chapter 5, the "Beatitudes (or attitudes to be), would be profitable.

Matthew 5:3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." – KJV. Here, the word "poor" means "those devoid of spiritual arrogance, those who regard themselves as insignificant" – Matt. 5:3 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:4: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." – KJV. Here, the word "mourn" refers to mourning "over their sins and repent" –Matt. 5:4 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." – KJV. Here, the word "meek" refers to "gentle [the kind-hearted, the sweet-spirited, the self-controlled]" – Matt. 5:5 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." – KJV. Here those who are hungering and thirsting could also be viewed as "those who actively seek right standing with God." – Matt. 5:6 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:7: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." – KJV. Here the Greek word for "merciful" is "eleemon (el-eh-ay-mon): from another Greek word: "eleeo (el-eh-eh-o): compassionate (actively)". - #1655, Greek Dictionary, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." – KJV. Here the "pure in heart" could be otherwise viewed as "those with integrity, moral courage, and godly character". – Matt. 5:8 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:9: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." – KJV. Here the "peacemakers" could also be viewed as "the makers *and* maintainers of peace, for they will [express His character]" – Matt. 5:9 Amplified Version.

Matthew 5:10: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." – KJV. Here the Greek word for "persecuted" is "dioko (dee-o-ko): to suffer and/or to flee" - #1377, Greek Dictionary, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

Matthew 5:11-12: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be

exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." – KJV. Here, instead of being reviled, one could phrase it as "falsely say all kinds of evil things against you because of [your association with] Me." – Matt. 5:11-12 Amplified Version.

As we can see, the "attitudes to be" don't seem to line up with what our elected leaders say and do regarding their so-called Christian experience! Sadly, they do not promote true religious freedom or what anyone, apparently including the new Pope, would recognize as Biblical Christianity.

What is being promoted as Religious Liberty or Freedom is the so-called "freedom" to inject, or force, legislatively or otherwise, one's own interpretation or view upon others! Right or wrong, that method is NEVER correct and certainly is never Christ like. "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." – Gospel Workers (1915 edition), pg. 363.

Religious Liberty encompasses many things. Ultimately, true Religious Liberty, or at least the belief in and practice of true Religious Liberty, allows both us and those we come into contact with, to prepare for the second coming of Jesus and eternal life with Him. So, the question that each of us must answer is this: What kind of Jesus do we serve?

God bless,

Bro. John

