

Private Convictions

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Many of our nation's founding documents mention belief in God, Bible-based virtues, and God's providential guidance. The founding fathers even invoked the name of the Creator in the Declaration of Independence. They were unafraid and uninhibited to speak openly on their religious and moral convictions.

In recent years, however, there has been a strong drive to intimidate God-fearing people into keeping silent about their convictions. This does not usually come in the form of an overt threat or a prohibition of religious belief. It is much more subtle than that.

The intimidation is usually disguised in a cloak of liberty and freedom. Christians are told, "You don't have any right to bind your beliefs on anyone else. This is a free country and people can do what they choose." Others are even more blunt; they unabashedly affirm that religion has no place in the public arena. It should not be discussed in a university class, on Capitol Hill or in the media.

"You can believe what you want, just keep it to yourself" is the new creed. And many have been intimidated into parroting the propaganda. How often have you heard, "Well, I personally believe abortion is wrong but I support a woman's right to choose." Or, "I believe homosexuality is wrong but I believe homosexuals have the right to work with small children in day-care centers."

Our government does not allow absolute individual freedom; individual freedom is always governed by common welfare. That is why an individual cannot exercise his free speech by yelling "Fire!" in a crowded movie theater.

The issue is not one of binding arbitrary beliefs; the issue is one of effect. Christians oppose abortion because they consider it to be the unlawful taking of life. Christians oppose free access to homosexuals because of the deviancy and disease that it produces. These things are injurious to the common welfare.

It is obvious why the liberal elements of our culture want to "privatize" religious convictions which condemn their practices and lifestyles. Private convictions are powerless to shape policy and thus restrict the self-indulgence upon which so many are bent. God's people cannot allow themselves to be muzzled regarding what is right and what is wrong.