

**The Great Culture War**  
***What Does the Future Hold?***  
**June 30, 2013**

**PRELUDE – Rise**

**Worship Songs – I Will Follow / You Never  
Let Go**

**Feature – Jesus Freak**

“What will people think?” That’s the question of the day.

- In this country ... if current trends continue as we go forward in time ... *what will people think (and do) about those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Way the Truth and the Life, that no one comes to the Father but through*

Him?

- What does the future hold here in the USA for individuals who believe, among other things, that morals and values are not relative and determined by each individual, but that God and the Word of God (the Bible) are the source?
- What's it going to be like to be an organization holding and proclaiming those kinds of views five years from now, 10 years from now, 20 years from now?

That's what I want to talk to you about this morning in this final message of our series "The Great Culture War."

As you know, if you've been here in the

past few weeks, we've been talking about the increasingly rapid pace at which morals and values in this country are shifting and how those of us who are Christians should think about and respond to that. And we're doing that primarily to prepare for our *next* series which begins two weeks from today. And in that series, we're going to look at four major issues in which the values shift is most visible and, in some cases, quite contentious. We're going to talk about gun control, the potential legalization of marijuana for recreational use, abortion and homosexuality/gay marriage.

**Here's the plan:**

- July 14      God & Guns
- July 21      God & "Grass"
- July 28      God & Gosnell

*(Kermit Gosnell is the Philadelphia abortion doctor recently convicted of murder)*

Aug 4 God & Gays

Aug 11 Q & A

*(I'll be answering questions that were turned in by the congregation throughout the series)*

It's going to be a challenging series. These are tough issues and there's a lot of emotion around them. We all know people who fit in those categories or have beliefs about those things. So we'll try to handle them in a way that honors God and honors one another. That's what's coming next.

But ... let's get back to today's issue which is also a very tough issue. And this

is the third time I've done this message and I'm just going to tell you it's a very hard message: *what does the future hold for those who believe in Jesus?*

## **The Problem Defined**

And by “those who believe in Jesus” I don't simply mean people who say “sure, I believe He died on a cross for my sins so I can go to Heaven when I die” (although that is part of the deal). I mean people who *also* say “He is Lord” – people who recognize that He is the Supreme Authority over the universe and, *therefore*, whatever opinions we have and whatever decisions we make ought to respect and take into account that authority and lordship ... *including* ... our opinions and our decisions about

issues like guns, grass, Gosnell, and gays.

I mean, that's pretty much what Jesus expects of people who follow Him, isn't it?

*“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” Luke 6:46 (NIV)*

“Why do you call me Lord but never consult Me about what you think and about how you live your life? I'm not really your Lord. You're just kidding yourself. You're just playing a religious game.”

Those who are true believers and true followers of Jesus will *always* attempt to ground their opinions and responses to

social and political issues not in the relativistic approach sanctioned by our culture ... not in the latest and loudest voices of conservatism or liberalism or patriotism or hedonism any other “ism” ... but in Christ and His Word. That’s just part of what it means for Jesus to be Lord over us.

(And by the way, as we saw last week, that doesn’t mean that every believer will come to the same conclusion on every issue. Unity among Christians is not dependent on coming to the same conclusions, especially on matters non-essential to the faith. Christian unity is rooted in seeking guidance from the same source and recognizing, again, His authority and Lordship to direct our personal opinions and actions).

What does the future hold for people like that? Well ... I don't think you need to be a prophet to conclude that, if things keep going the way they are ...

**In the short-term it will be much more difficult to be a person (or an organization, i.e. "church") who appeals to God and His Word as the source of morals and values.**

What do you mean by "much more difficult, Rick?" I mean there is going to be persecution. After all, Jesus himself said "if they persecuted me, they will persecute you."

Actually, I want to read his entire quote to you.

**Speaking to his very first disciples, Jesus said:**

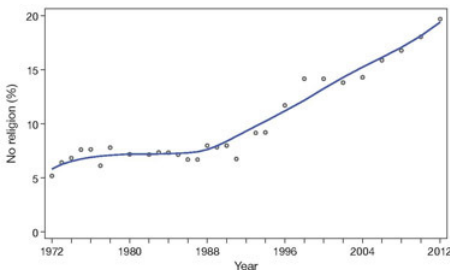


*“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.*

*“Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also ... They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.”*            *John 15:19-21 (NIV)*

And more and more in this country, people do not know God. According to analysis of newly released survey data by researchers from the University of

California, and Duke University, religious affiliation in the United States is at its lowest point since it began to be tracked in the 1930s. Researchers found that 20 percent of a nationally representative group reported no religious preference. That's a jump from 1990 when all but 8 percent of Americans polled identified with an organized faith.



Note: Line smoothes the data to highlight main trend; the circles are each survey's estimate.  
Source: General Social Surveys, 1972-2012.

People were asked, “What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?” The graph you see on the

screen illustrates the trend of the “no religion” answer and the remarkable jump since 1990.

What’s most concerning (at least to me) is that the study also found that more than one-third of 18-to-24-year-olds claimed “no religion” compared to just 7 percent of those 75 and older<sup>i</sup> ... which makes a strong case that as the older generations die off, that line on the graph will continue up and to the right at the same pace or even greater going forward. There’s a whole generation of people coming into political and cultural leadership who have little to no knowledge of any religion ... well, except for the “religion of tolerance” which, as we’ve seen repeatedly, is tolerant of every moral position under the sun except for the Judeo-Christian moral

position ... which probably shouldn't be a shock to us.

**Almost 2,000 years ago, the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy ...**

*There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous ...*

*2 Timothy 3:1-3 (NIV)*

*... without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. 2*

## *Timothy 3:4-5 (NIV)*

He could have easily written that after reading the Kansas City Star this morning.

**And then he makes this prediction:**

*In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:12-13 (NIV)*

## **In the Short Term**

Now, persecution can mean many things and can come in many forms. It can be subtle and understated or it can be overt

and extreme. I don't think we're anywhere near the point of "overt and extreme" but I do think we're about to move beyond "subtle and understated."

What does that look like? Again, I'm no prophet but I don't think it's that hard to follow the trajectory of current trends to see where they are going. I see three things happening in the short-term.

**1. Increasing ridicule of Christians and Christianity by the general public.**

To this point, whatever ridicule there has been has come mostly from "social elites" and the media. For instance, when's the last time you saw a positive example of a Christian in a TV show or a movie? Other than Duck Dynasty, it's just not there. But again and again, we

see examples of with how “normal” and “wholesome” and “constructive” the gay culture is.

And please don't hear what I am not saying. I am not saying that there are no good people in the gay culture. I'm saying when you look at the comparison of the two in the media, there's no question which is honored and which is ridiculed.

Scott Santis of the Chicago Tribune provided a great illustration of this in a cartoon he drew right after Jason Collins, “came out.”

### **Tebow/Collins cartoon**



To further prove the point, even though he wrote “This cartoon is a comment not so much on either Tebow or Collins but, rather, on the media and the culture we live with today” Santis was blasted all over the internet. It’s just not acceptable to make a Christian look good.

Tom Gilson, a writer for Breakpoint (a Christian publication), explains the dynamic at work behind the scenes:

A new thing has happened in the history of the West: *Christianity has been painted as evil*. It is evil



because (critics say) it is anti-woman, anti-equality, anti-freedom of thought. It is evil because (critics say) it opposes science and our culture's march into the future. Most of all it is evil because of (so critics say) its bigoted and judgmental stand against equality in love and marriage.

**He concludes:**

There have always been those who have hated Christ and Christianity. Never before in the West, though, has that opinion dominated media and education as it does now.<sup>ii</sup>

Now, think about this: *who gets the most attention from media and education?* The younger people ... which

means that there's a generation coming in this country who have been indoctrinated in this belief that Christianity is evil, especially if they attended a secular university. And if we had time, I could spend the rest of the morning on that alone.

Bottom line, unless something changes, the belief that "Christianity is evil" will become the de-facto standard for judging Christians and churches.

As result, I think the day is coming when it might be hard as an evangelical Christian to buy a house or get into college or get a job with an employer who doesn't believe or who doesn't want the hassle that comes from having a Christian on the payroll.

**2. The second thing I see happening is discriminatory removal of evidences of Judeo-Christian heritage in government and educational institutions.<sup>iii</sup>**

I say discriminatory because there is no other reason for the removal other than the bias that Christianity is somehow evil.

We've already seen this happening at some level.

- Prayer has been banned from public schools
- Nativity scenes at “the city square” have been removed.
- It's unconstitutional to post the Ten Commandments in public buildings.
- The National Park Service

attempted to turn a capstone replica of the Washington Monument, bearing the inscription "Laus Deo" or "Praise be to God" so the public could not read it.<sup>iv</sup>

- There have been attempts (unsuccessful to this point) to remove “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance, and “in God we trust” from U.S. currency and coins.

But I don't think we're too far from seeing that and other movements to minimize the story of the role faith played in the establishment of this nation become successful. Let me say it even more strongly: I think the day is coming when, if it were possible to completely erase our Judeo-Christian heritage, it would be done. And it would

be a lie.

Again, if we had time I could spend all morning on this. Most people today have no idea of the depth and extent to which faith in God – in the Christian God no less – played a role in the founding of our country and the principles we adopted.

Let me give you just one example.

Everyone has heard about the “wall of separation between church and state” and interprets it as “freedom from religion” specifically that “No religion is going to control us or our government!” In fact, however, the words “separation of church and state” never appear in the Constitution or in the Bill of Rights.

They come from a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote to the Danbury, CT, Baptist Association in response to a concern that the association had that the government was going to officially endorse the Anglican church. Jefferson was basically reassuring them, “We are going to protect the church from the government. It didn't mean that no Christian idea could be shared in the public square.”

To further illustrate the point, that letter was written Friday January 1, 1802. Just two days after sending this letter, on January 3, 1802, President Thomas Jefferson attended a church service in the U.S. Capitol. And he did so for seven years. Most people don't realize it, but the U.S. Capitol (as well as the Supreme Court!) hosted a church service every

week until the mid-1800s<sup>v</sup> ... point being the original understanding of “separation of church and state” is not the same as people are interpreting it today.

Now, don't hear what I'm not saying. I'm not saying we need to go back to prayer in schools or nativity scenes on public property. I'm just saying it's wrong to lie about parts of your history even if you have been duped into believing that it's evil.

And it's part of the persecution that's coming.

**3. One more form of persecution, I think, will be negative legal consequences for churches and Christians espousing traditional biblical doctrine and values.**

We're already seeing this to some extent.

- IRS harassment of Tea Party affiliates – many of whom self-identify as “evangelical Christians.”
- The Department of Defense came out and said that it would court-martial any soldier who tried to “proselytize” – though later it backed off on that and toned it down.
- Then, there is the decision by Health and Human Services to require even religious-based employers to offer insurance that provides free contraceptives in violation of their beliefs
- Finally, there's the whole Chick-fil-a controversy where the owner of the



company, an evangelical Christian, said – in response to a question – he thinks gay marriage is immoral. Whether he’s right or wrong isn’t the issue. In response, mayors of several cities and as well as several universities tried to ban franchises from opening because of his “homophobic attitude.”

And I think it’s going to get a lot worse. I think the day is coming when ...

- Churches will be required to perform gay marriage or lose tax exempt status or worse.
- Pastors (and individual Christians) will be fined for publicly speaking against any culturally approved moral position as “hate speech”
- Churches will be denied building

permits unless they agree

- Christian businesses will be denied licenses unless they agree

“Ok, come on Rick, it’s not going to get that bad.”

Really? Let me read you Supreme Court Justice Scalia’s dissenting opinion on the recent Supreme Court decision concerning gay marriage.

“It is one thing for a society to elect change; it is another for a court of law to impose change *by adjudging those who oppose it ‘enemies of the human race’* ... by declaring anyone opposed to same-sex marriage *an enemy of human decency* ... In the majority’s telling, this story is black-and-white: Hate your neighbor or

come along with us.”<sup>vi</sup>

Now, ask yourself, what group has expressed the most opposition to the idea of gay marriage? Evangelical Christians – people who believe that Jesus is Savior *and* Lord. The day is coming when the law and the court will be against any Christian or church that expresses a belief that is against any kind of behavior.

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Now, having said all of that, I’ll admit I could be wrong about some of the specifics, but I stand by my point: *I do think it’s going to get harder to be a Christian.*

As a result ...

- I think we're going to see church attendance continue to decline as CHINOS (Christians in name only) decide that it's too hard.
- I think we're going to see more churches compromise biblical doctrine in order to be culturally acceptable and avoid whatever persecution there might be. (But they won't grow – they will become increasingly meaningless and irrelevant. Who needs a church which never makes demands because it always agrees with “whatever you want to do”?)
- And one day, if things continue, our country might be added to a “watch list” that is updated annually by an

organization called “Open Doors” which tracks worldwide persecution of Christians.

As I was preparing for this message, I spent some time researching what persecution of Christians is like in other parts of the world these days and I came across their annual report from 2012. Let me show you a bit of it right now.

<<End Slide Set 1>>

**Video – “Open Doors World Watch List 2012”**

<<Begin Slide Set 2>>

A lot of people *do* get persecuted for their faith in this world. It really does happen.

Now, obviously, what’s happening in our

country today is nothing like any of that and probably won't be like that in the next 10 years and probably not even in my lifetime. However, that doesn't mean it's not coming. Religious persecution in *democratic countries* develops in small steps.

When the Jews of Germany were wiped out by Hitler, it did not begin as an overt and extreme oppression. When he became Chancellor in 1933, he started by merely proclaiming a one-day boycott against Jewish businesses. That year he also saw to it that a law was passed against kosher butchering. In public schools, Jewish children began to experience restrictions. By 1935, the Nuremburg Laws deprived Jews of German citizenship. In 1936, Jews were prohibited from participation in

parliamentary elections and signs appeared in many German cities reading, “Jews not welcome.”<sup>vii</sup>

After that ... well, we know how the story goes.

Again, that’s not to say it will happen here but the sentiment that was ginned up against Jews in Germany and the sentiment that’s developing against Christians and churches in the United States (actually, all over the Western World) bear some striking similarities. And quite frankly, when I think of my kids and grandkids – and the young people of this church – I’m quite concerned about it.

## **How to Respond**

So, let's get on the solution side. What can we do at this point knowing that the trend in this direction is accelerating?

One thought – and this would make sense especially to those who are hostile to Christianity – is to just get rid of it altogether. “Religion,” they argue, “is at the root of all the problems in this world. It tries to control people; it only leads to conflict and makes people do stupid things – like the Crusades!” (although people who say that typically don't know anything *about* the Crusades).

I certainly don't want to minimize the wrongs done in the name of Christ, but the historical record shows that atheistic systems (like Communist China and



Marxist Russia and their satellites all over the world) are at least as bad in terms of control and violence. The real problem isn't religion or Christianity or even atheism. *It's people.* We're all sinners and sin destroys in little ways and in big ways.

So, the most logical answer to the problem isn't to get rid of Christianity. It's for those who claim to be Christians to live out the faith more fully and completely. More and better Christian living by Christians – not less – is the answer.

Assuming that's where we are – that we are Christians striving to live more like Jesus and not less – how should we respond to the potential of persecution from an increasingly hostile culture?

Let me give you three more thoughts – the first dealing with “the persecutors”; the second with “the political system” and the third with ourselves.

**1. In dealing with the persecutors ... do what Jesus said: “Love them.”**

... because, quite frankly, they are not the real enemy. We talked about who the real enemy is in the second week of this series. If you missed it, listen, read or watch online at our website. The people who persecute believers are captives themselves of the real enemy.

**That’s why Jesus could say ...**

*“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse*

*you, pray for those who mistreat you ... Love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.*

*“Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”*

*Luke 6:27-28,35-36  
(NIV)*

People need to come to Christ as their savior and we can never forget that this is our purpose in this world.

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The second thought is about dealing with the political system - and that is to

...

**2. Refocus politically on “First Amendment issues” instead of “moral issues.”**

And I almost can't believe I said that because, as you know, while I strongly believe in Christians having political opinions and voting or running for office if they see fit, I have been just as strongly against organized political movements in the name of Christ; against pastors and church leaders trying to influence congregations to vote a certain way.

And that's because, as we've seen in this series, attempting to accomplish moral and spiritual goals through the use of political power has not only failed, it has also played right into the prevailing anti-

Christian narrative that followers of Jesus do not love people and only want to force their morals on everyone else by “taking this country back to the 1950s.” And that’s not been helpful whatsoever to the cause of Christ and I’m glad it’s over.

However, what I’m talking about here is not *Christians* taking action to obtain or preserve a moral or spiritual victory. I’m talking about *citizens* taking action to preserve the rights laid out in the First Amendment to the Constitution; rights that benefit every group in America – atheists, gays, liberals, conservatives as well as Christians.

Here’s what it says:

Congress shall make no law

respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Rick Warren recently pointed out that religious liberty is often called our “First Freedom” because it is the first phrase of the first sentence of the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights. It comes before all the other the freedoms for a reason: the first American settlers, Pilgrims, came to America for this very reason – seeking the freedom to PRACTICE their religion, which they were denied in Europe.

This is the freedom that made America unique from all other nations.

Beyond that, the founders of our nation believed that freedom was divinely instituted by God.

**As the Apostle Paul wrote ...**

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1 (NIV)*

That's why, in The Declaration of Independence, we read in the closing statements ...

We, therefore ... appealing to the

*Supreme Judge of the world* for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States.<sup>viii</sup>

This principle matters friends, and we need to not lose sight of it as our privilege not as Christians but as citizens.

For me personally, I have decided that I have a new litmus test for every politician I consider voting for. Instead of first asking if he or she matches up with my own personal moral convictions, I'm going to ask *first* does he or she believe in protecting freedom



above all else. Does he or she believe that every citizen – including those evil intolerant Christians – have as much right as any other to hold certain convictions; to assemble or speak out about those convictions without fear of governmental reprisal?

Because unless this freedom is protected, all of us will eventually be persecuted by our own government. Today it will be Christians, tomorrow it will be some other group.

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So, in dealing with the “persecutors” love them; in dealing with the political system, do whatever you can to help preserve and protect the rights established under the First Amendment.

Finally, in dealing with yourself ...

**3. Do what it takes to deepen your faith *now* ... before the storm.**

... because the storm *is* coming – whether it comes in the form of the kind of persecution I’m talking about (or worse) or just the normal trials of life. The storm is coming and because of that, Jesus advised us to prepare for it now.

*“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”*

... he asks. Then he continues ...

*As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into*

*practice, I will show you what they are like.*

*They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. Luke 6:48 (NIV)*

What are you doing to put your roots down deep into Christ? Do you know what you believe and why? Do you have a close friendship with God – do you walk with Him daily? Do you sense his presence? Are you connected with other believers who can encourage you?

All of these things are what builds our foundation so that when the storm

comes – and it will – we can remain standing.

## **Is It Worth It?**

Of course, at this point, some people might think, “wow, with all of the potentially bad things that could happen and the difficulty of responding in the way you’re talking about, is it really worth it to be a believer? To be a Christian?”

I think Jesus himself was aware that some of his followers might be wondering that. After describing the challenges of persecution and encouraging his disciples to pray and not give up, he closes with this thought.

*"Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?"*

*I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.*

(There will be vindication for all who are persecuted for his sake, Jesus is saying)

*However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:7-8 (NIV)*

Wow – that’s pretty strong. When Jesus returns will he find that people have stuck with Him and the faith or will they have given up because it’s too hard?

So, why would anyone stay with it? And I'm not talking about the relatively minor persecutions that we're going to face in the next 5 to 10 to 20 years here in the USA. I'm talking about what believers in China face. I'm talking about what believers in the Arab world face. I'm talking about the assault the enemy of our soul (Satan and his demonic forces) is constantly unleashing against our minds, bodies and spirits.

Why stay with it?

- We stay with it because our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all (2 Corinthians 4:17) and our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)

- We stay with it because if we are insulted because of the name of Christ, we are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on us. (1 Peter 4:13).
- We stay with it because even though many turn away from the faith and betray each other, and their love grows cold, the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. (Matthew 24:10-13)
- We stay with it because in his great mercy God has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:4-5)

- We stay with it because he has given us an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade that is waiting in heaven for us at this very moment. (1 Peter 1:5)
- We stay with it because “if God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31)
- We stay with it because we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who, have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)
- We stay with it because we are convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any



powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
(Romans 8:37-39)

**We stay with it because ...**

*God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, [and the day is coming when] at the name of Jesus every knee should bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth – and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.      Philippians  
2:9-11 (NIV)*

**We stay with it because God has**

## **plans for us ...**

*“I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)*

Friends, nations rise and nations fall. Empires come and empires go. Trials and tribulations begin and trials and tribulations end. Through all of it, the love of God and power of the Holy Spirit remains. We will survive here in the United States and all over the world. We will endure. We will overcome because He overcame.

Let's pray together.

## **Feature w/Dance – “Great Plans”**

### **CLOSING COMMENTS – Rick**

1. Two weeks ... specific issue: God & Guns (very creative stuff musically/visually)
2. Next Sunday – Andy Rhea & The Corners

#### **pic of Andy/Band**

Andy is an amazing musician as well as a great young man and we're so fortunate to have him and his band. They'll be leading the worship as well as doing several songs from their recent album. We'll also have a brief message from Ladell Thomason, so it

will be a great day all around.

3. Fireworks – “sitting at home, nothing to do on July 4<sup>th</sup>” ... come help us! After the party ... come help us tear down and pack up. 11pm – 3am. Stop at the table in the commons.

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> <http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2013/03/12/non-believers/>

<sup>ii</sup> Tom Gilson, <http://www.breakpoint.org/features-columns/breakpoint-columns/entry/2/20550>

<sup>iii</sup> See <http://forbes.house.gov/igwt/>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://forbes.house.gov/uploadedfiles/washingtonmonumentletter.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/religion/relo6-2.html>

<sup>vi</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/26/domas-scalia\\_n\\_3503706.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=mostpopular](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/26/domas-scalia_n_3503706.html?utm_hp_ref=mostpopular)

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vii Adapted from [brorobert.com/2012/03/13/is-religious-persecution-coming-to-america/](http://brorobert.com/2012/03/13/is-religious-persecution-coming-to-america/)

viii [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html)