
Religious
Freedom
Week

Religious Freedom in Australia

Christians in Australia have historically been very blessed. We have been able to practice our faith publicly without fear of persecution.

More recently, our culture has become increasingly at odds with historic Christian belief, especially when it comes to issues of sexuality, gender, and preserving the lives of the unborn and the elderly. As a result, **there are increasing examples of people losing jobs because of their beliefs, and governments restricting the rights of Christian schools, hospitals, churches and even families to operate within a Christian ethical framework.**

As a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, **Australia is obligated to protect religious freedom as a human right.**

But increasingly, new anti-discrimination legislation is stripping away protections for religious freedom.

We know that God's power is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9) and that the Gospel cannot be chained (2 Timothy 2:9). And while we know that God can work through all circumstances, **working to preserve religious freedom is not just a self-centred issue for Christians.**

Erosions of religious freedom are a concern for all people of faith. Freedom For Faith is partnered with Muslim, Jewish and Hindu groups, who are all concerned about the threats to religious freedom. **It is an act of neighbour-love to work to preserve religious freedom in Australia.**



Threats to Religious Freedom

Freedom For Faith are particularly concerned about the following threats to religious freedom:

- The proposal by the NSW government to ban 'Conversion Therapy'. The proposed legislation goes beyond banning coercive practices and may also affect consensual counselling, prayer, and sermons aimed at helping same-sex attracted Christians to live out their religious convictions.
- The proposal from the Australian Law Reform Commission to strip religious schools of the right to select staff who believe and live out the faith of the school.
- The example of Victoria, which has restricted the rights of all religious organisations to employ staff who hold to their faith.
- The proposed Human Rights Act put forward by the Australian Human Rights Commission which subordinates religious freedom under other human rights rather than holding them as equal.
- The continued lack of a Religious Discrimination Bill means that people of faith can be discriminated against because of their religion.

You can learn more about the challenges to religious freedom at freedomforfaith.org.au/religious-freedom-week



What Can I Do?

Pray

- For the protection of religious freedom in Australia.
- For God-given wisdom for lawmakers.
- For courage and boldness for Christians who may face difficult choices under unjust laws.
- For comfort, provision and community for Christians who experience bullying or pressure or who lose friends, family or employment.

Contact Your MP

Talk to your local MP about religious freedom. Whether at a state or federal level, MPs want to know what issues their constituents care about.

You could organise a small group to meet with your MP, call their office, or send them an email.

Basically no political action has a higher impact than directly talking to your elected representatives!

The website contactyourmp.org.au has great resources on how to do this well.



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Join the Freedom For Faith email list to keep up to date on religious freedom news in Australia. Sign up at freedomforfaith.org.au/subscribe

