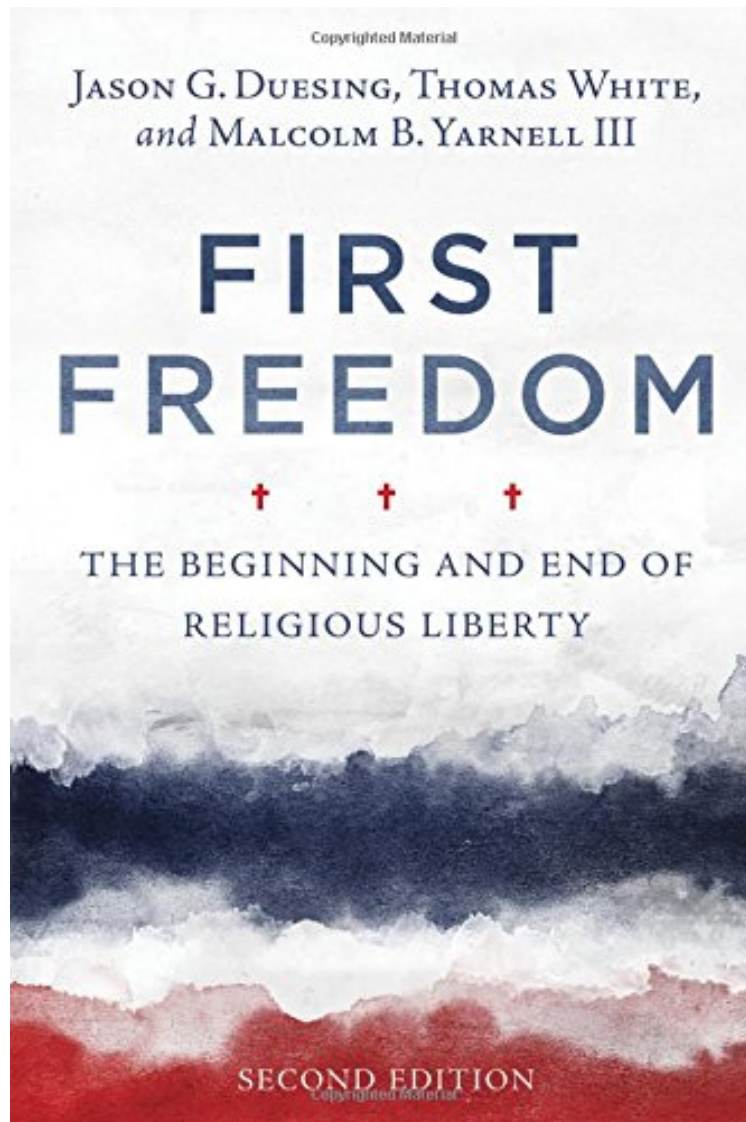


[Download ebook] First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty

First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty

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#1096289 in Books Ingramcontent 2016-10-15 2016-10-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .60 x 6.00l, .0 #File Name: 1433644371288 pagesFirst Freedom The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty | File size: 46.Mb

From Ingramcontent : **First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Timely resource on the history, meaning, and purpose of religious liberty.By Steven J. Dresen Jr.In First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Liberty editors Jason G. Duesing , Thomas White, and Malcom Yarnell have compiled a resource on religious liberty that should be in every Christian

leader's hands. While many are breathing a sigh of relief over the result of the elections, the truth of the matter is that religious liberty in America is ill-understood in the church and stands on precarious ground in our current cultural milieu. The first section of this book addresses the historical background of religious liberty. Dr. Patterson demonstrates how religious liberty is entirely consistent with the New Testament doctrine of the exclusivity of Christ. In the historical context given it is readily evident that the rejection of religious liberty was one of the greatest shortcomings of the magisterial Reformers. What is made clear by White and Yarnell in their chapters is that religious liberty is a tenant inherent to the Baptist identity, and our republic has the influence of early Baptists largely to thank for the inclusion of this principal in our founding documents. The third section is particularly important in how thoroughly the contributors explain the meaning of religious liberty, which is particularly important as many are seeking to encroach upon individuals right to free expression of their religious beliefs, which is especially seen in the opposition encountered by those who are opposed to same-sex marriage. The third and final chapter addresses the looming challenges to religious liberty in contemporary America. The contributors address the dangers posed to religious liberty by the continuing encroachment of the progressive movement in regards to human sexuality, as well as implications to Christian schools, and the bearing of international law on religious liberty. What is the purpose of the religious liberty we strive to protect in America? Is it our own personal comfort and protection? Ultimately the purpose of our religious liberty is as Duesing says in his closing chapter, "the glory of God in salvation through judgment(256)." Our faith is a faith that incorporates all of our life and currently we have been given great freedom to share the good news of the gospel with a lost and dying world to an extent that is truly unprecedented in human history. Read this book and let it remind you of the value and true purpose of religious liberty in bringing the gospel to those who need to hear it. Disclosure: I received a copy of the book from the publisher for the purpose of reviewing it. The opinions I have expressed are my own, and I was not required to write a positive review. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Challenging read, important subject By Don I laboured through this volume, I have to say that right up front. It is not that the subject isn't important, it is very important. The subject attracted me to the book right up front. It is not that the writers are ignorant of their subject, they demonstrate (on the whole) a commendable grasp of the many-faceted topic that is religious freedom. The difficulty, I think, is two-fold. One is that the book is a collection of essays rather than a cohesive discussion of the subject written by a single author. Collections of essays tend to suffer some discontinuity as a matter of course. They also suffer from uneven quality as some writers are simply better than others. This is true of this book, to be sure. The second difficulty is that the subject matter itself is of such a nature that riveting prose is doubtless a constant challenge for any writer. Thus, though informative in many ways, the volume is not easy reading. The book is a second edition, the first being published in 2007. I am not sure how much material is repeated from the first edition and how much is brand new. My impression is that it is mostly new material. The first section of the book is called Religious Liberty in History. It is most likely the portion that is of most interest to general readers, although there is some overlap here with volumes on Baptist History. Paige Patterson offers the most readable chapter, though perhaps not the most in depth. He asks the question, Is it possible for one to hold an exclusive view of salvation and still be a proponent of religious liberty? (p. 11) This is a fundamental question. Patterson shows that liberty is implied by the Lords teaching itself and notes that the gospel is non-coercive in nature, dependent on the faith-decision of its adherents, not by force, but by faith. Thomas White addresses the history of the Anabaptists and early Baptists (especially the English Baptists) to trace out the beginnings of the notion of religious liberty while Malcolm Yarnell discusses the American scene. It is interesting that while Baptists generally championed religious liberty, they were not all for universal religious liberty. Some weakness in support for liberty is a consequence of the black mark of slavery in the thinking of some early Baptists. The second section of the book is Religious Liberty 101, an attempt at an apologia for religious liberty, based both on the Bible and sound reasoning. The thesis of Barrett Dukes The Christian Doctrine of Religious Liberty is that One can argue that religious liberty is a universal right for all people from a number of perspectives. (p. 87) Looking back over my notes, it appears that this chapter moved my pen the most and it may be the most important chapter of the book. Duke notes threats to religious liberty, which include religious fundamentalism among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, Christ-confessing groups in some countries [who only want freedom for their religion, not for others], totalitarian states, something else that he calls fundamentalist secularism and, a matter of great challenge, post-modernism. There are a number of significant arguments for religious liberty in this chapter that are worth pondering and further study. A chapter called Religious Liberty and the Gospel makes a few good points, but in my notes I assessed it as a fairly weak chapter. I thought it repeated material already found in other chapters and perhaps didn't develop its points well enough. Religious Liberty and the Public Square, by Andrew Walker has as its purpose to explore the future of religious liberty as it relates to the public square. (p. 128) The chapter touches on several points of contact with present thought, analyzing where the conflict occurs. The current climate sees religion as stifling to liberty, consequently as discriminatory and thus something evil. It might surprise Christians, but our world does not look at religion in general as a net good for society. A few key quotes here: Changing demographics are breeding a new class of citizens for whom religion is foreign. The future of religious liberty is unsettled and precarious. (p. 142) The struggle for religious liberty lies at the heart of the struggle to maintain a free society. (p. 143) If we don't value religious liberty for others, it must be because

weve not experienced for ourselves how deep religious conviction runs. (p. 146)The third section is called Contemporary Challenges to Religious Liberty. Two of the best known writers from the Southern Baptist Convention participate here, Russell Moore and Al Mohler. Moores chapter was somewhat disappointing he seemed to be repetitive and I wasnt clear what he was arguing for in Conservative Christians in an Era of Christian Conservatives. Mohler addressed The Gathering Storm: Religious Liberty in the Wake of the Sexual Revolution, but he likewise disappointed with lofty sounding rhetoric but not much substance that I could see. Thomas Whites offering was Religious Liberty and the Christian University. The author is the president of Cedarville University and shows a good grasp of the challenges universities and colleges face in the current American environment. Interestingly, he touches on how the health-care debate affects religious liberty: An increasingly nationalized system of health-care forces the government to entangle itself in medical decisions with ethical and religious implications. (p. 203) The chapter is one of the strongest in the book. The last chapter, by Travis Wussow, deals with religious liberty issues and International Law. The author is well versed in one of the driest and most difficult to read aspects of this subject. The challenges to religious liberty are world-wide, but as liberty erodes in America, it is hard to see how it will be maintained elsewhere, no matter what well-meaning people try to do at the United Nations level (or any other international institutions).Ill conclude by quoting from Jason Duesings Conclusion: The End of Religious Liberty. (He also wrote the Introduction: The Beginning of Religious Liberty.):In this revised edition of First Freedom, the authors have endeavored, first, to show how Christians have defended religious liberty throughout history. Christians have sought though not perfectly or consistently to ensure freedom of all religions in order to adorn the public marketplace of ideas and not coerce or establish one religion over another. Second, this volume has sought to present the biblical and rational defense for the practice and protection of religious liberty in the United States and abroad. Third, this volume has reviewed the present and future threats to religious liberty as its advocates seek to weather a movement to drive religious belief, and especially orthodox Christian religious and moral convictions, out of public life. (p. 249).This paragraph summarizes what the book is about. I think that it achieved its objectives in general but due to the nature of its construction, it does not really address the subject as thoroughly as one could wish. The book has value as an introduction and a resource (it has copious footnotes but no bibliography). If one would like a biblical worldview of religious liberty, this book can contribute to shaping your thinking, but it is not easy reading. One final note, I was disappointed to see positive citations of Evangelicals and Catholics Together. Apparently the document does address religious liberty concerns, but the theological compromise it represents are so damaging that it is disappointing for Baptists to fail to at least acknowledge that fact. Surely we dont need such documents to bolster a biblical worldview of religious liberty. I also need to note that I received a free copy of this book from the publisher for the purposes of this review. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. loved the historical perspective! By lighthouse88 When I started reading the book I wasnt aware that it focused on religious liberty from a Baptist point of view. I wasnt raised Baptist however there is much I gleaned from the book, so matter your denominational background or practice here is a book which should be in a personal library in homes across America. Now why would I suggest such an investment? There are several reasons for my suggestion. One, here is a book which clearly and precisely lays out a historical legacy of beliefs for religious freedom here in the states and why. Second, the essays also point out theological reasoning for sharing the gospel in a noncoercive manner. Third, the authors of the essays lay out how contemporary issues are affecting religious freedom in this nation today. I found myself challenged once again to be able to lay before others the reason for the hope which I have because of Christ. I found statements made which caused me to pause and consider what the essays were putting forth regardless of whether I agreed with everything or not. Once again it reminds us as Christians that it is our duty to share the gospel with others while reminding us that we all have free will. God gave mankind free will and He has never revoked that decision, therefore we shouldnt try to coerce others to believe too. Share the gospel the hope that is within you and then if the person wishes not to listen then stop. When you come across another individual share again and if they desire to listen or discuss beliefs with you then lovingly show them why you believe what you believe. In a world where access to information is instantaneous learning takes time, commitment and sacrifice. Personally I love learning, reading and studying. I do have a personal conviction to do so until my last breath. As God leads me to share then that is what I do and I want to do it in a manner which invites discussion, and a yearning to know Jesus. I dont always share it correctly or with grace but I am grateful that the Lord is teaching me how to do so with each new day.

Challenges to religious liberty are increasingly common today as historical Christianity comes into conflict with a new, secular orthodoxy. In this thoroughly revised second edition of First Freedom, leading evangelical scholars present the biblical and historical foundations for religious freedom in America, and address pressing topics such as: * Religious freedom and the exclusivity of the gospel * The Christian doctrine of religious liberty * Religious liberty and the public square * Religious freedom and the sexual revolution * Baptist contributions to religious freedom, and much more. The contributors equip churches, pastors, and Christian citizens to uphold this first freedom given by God and defended by Christians throughout our nations history.

As religious liberties erode in America, *First Freedom* is a refreshing resource presenting pertinent information for all to consider regarding this seminal topic. Steve Gaines, president, Southern Baptist Convention, and senior pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church It is difficult to exaggerate the historical importance of the Baptist witness to religious liberty. The spiritual ancestors of the contributors to the volume would be as proud of them as I am grateful to them for placing their impressive intellectual gifts at the service of our first freedom. Robert P. George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence, Princeton University This book is an excellent resource for believers to be informed about religious liberty so they can take their place in helping to defend it both now and for future generations. Erik W. Stanley, senior counsel and director of the Center for Christian Ministries, Alliance Defending Freedom