



July 14, 2003

Donald B. Crawford, President

THE STAND
THE CONSTITUTION
THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or bridging 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.

What an unbelievable set of RIGHTS! Here they are once again:

1. Congress can make no law which in anyway establishes or supports religion of any kind.
2. Congress can not prohibit the free exercise, belief in and practice of religion of any kind.
3. Congress shall in no way abridge the freedom of speech. Say what you want, when you want, where you want, and to whom you want.
4. Congress shall not prohibit the right of we the people to peaceably assemble. We can get together, convene in any way and at any time, for any reason as long as the gathering is peaceable.
5. Congress can not prohibit any citizen from petitioning the government for a redress of grievances. We can complain any way we want, as much as we want, about anything we want.

Note the first point. Congress has to get out of the way of religion, totally and completely. It can make no law, and consequently it is powerless when it comes to any kind of regulation of religious practice or belief. Many if the not most of the founding father were Christian. Yet, they made it clear in the very first amendment to the Constitution that no political person as a part of Congress could ever meddle in the affairs of religion in any way. Yet, strangely, Congress, state legislatures and certainly the judiciary have meddled with religion around the edges in so many ways since 1787. The meddling goes on today, directly and indirectly. What many in Congress can not do directly is often attempted indirectly. If Congress can't make laws in substance, Congress can often thwart the establishment and practice of religion in procedure. When it comes to religion, it seems as though so many try to find so many ways to lessen or even extinguish the rights of people of faith under the Constitution. All such people of faith and Christians are more than every dependent upon watchdog groups which watch over the actions of Congress, lobby, dialog and jawbone, and inform the public of the thinking and actions of individual Congresspersons especially when it comes to action with respect to the First Amendment. Pay close attention whenever you become aware that Congress is meddling with the affairs of religion. Your First Amendment rights are in play!

The First Amendment also prohibits Congress from meddling with, regulating or prohibiting the free exercise of religious practice. Believe, what you want, says the Constitution, and practice those beliefs as you will without congressional or legal restraint. Choose the time, the day to worship or celebrate. Offer and implement religious practices and principles. Establish ritual and tradition, your way. Believe what you want, and practice your faith as you will, without restraint, prohibition, interference or meddling by any political, legislative, executive or judicial interference. Any governing body should stay away from the heart and mind of any individual in the pursuit of faith and belief, and the practice of religion. So says the Constitution.

Religions disagree, even to the point of believing other religions wrong. Spiritual dialog regarding right and wrong is healthy. The battle for truth must be fought by individuals, one on one, by various religious faiths, institutions and organizations in terms of the passion they have for what they believe. That is good, healthy, the Constitutional way, the American way, the right way. You and I, Constitutionally, can champion our faith and freely exercise our religious belief and practices with full Constitutional protection. Carry your faith, your beliefs, and your principles into the marketplace of ideas, encountering people one on one and speak freely, loudly and passionately without fear. And, assemble anywhere, anytime, with anyone, as you will, with the full protection of the Constitution. And, anytime any governmental authority of any kind interferes, petition them, go at them aggressively to redress the grievances, especially Constitutional grievances. The First Amendment with all of its incredible rights is for you. The Constitution is for you. America is for you! Stand tall as a citizen, an American, and a Christian. THESE ARE YOUR RIGHTS!