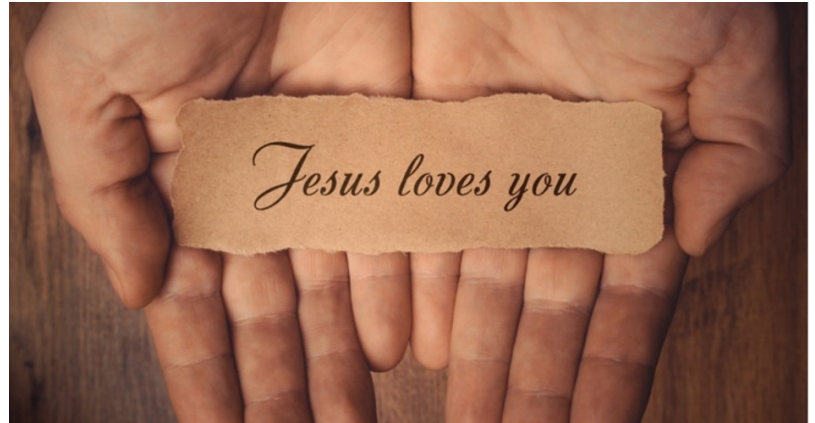




Virginia Persecutes Christian Realtor Over “Jesus Loves You”

Under the guise of combating “discrimination,” a rogue government body in Virginia is brazenly persecuting and discriminating against a Christian real-estate agent. Her supposed crime: using the phrase “Jesus loves you” in her e-mail signature and featuring the John 3:16 Bible verse on her website. Seriously. But now, a prominent Christian legal organization is coming to her aid, warning that anti-Christian discrimination cannot be tolerated in America.



Until recently, Virginia Realtor Hadassah Carter has never been accused by anyone of “discrimination.” Her clients include Catholics, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Kenyans, and more. And no client has ever suggested anything wrong. But because she is Christian and publicly shares her faith, authorities at the Virginia Real Estate Board put a target on her back. If the government is successful, Carter will either forfeit her God-given rights to free speech and religious liberty, or lose her livelihood.

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Even more terrifying than the individual persecution of Carter, perhaps, are the broader implications of the case for religious liberty and free speech in Virginia and beyond. If state authorities are successful in silencing or destroying Carter, it could mean that everyone who holds a government license to engage in commerce — from plumbers and barbers to hairstylists and attorneys — could lose their God-given rights to speak, too.

Ironically, Carter became a target while reporting a case of suspected racial discrimination to authorities. It seems the email alerted them to her signature pointing out that, as John 3:16 puts it, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” She was never accused of refusing to rent to or represent anyone. Instead, the argument is that a realtor using religious speech could hypothetically make somebody “feel” discriminated against.

And so, with officials claiming “Jesus loves you” was a violation of the state’s “fair housing” statute, Carter became a target. Among other actions, they forced her employer into an agreement that required them to either fire her or monitor her and report any religious comments she might make to the government. Of course, as a Christian, Carter could not remain silent about Christ, so she resigned rather than be silenced.

In response to the flagrant abuse of power and persecution, the [non-profit American Center for Law and Justice filed a lawsuit](#) charging Virginia authorities with violating Carter’s First Amendment-protected rights, as well as various state-level constitutional and statutory protections. “This is an attack on free speech and basic religious liberty,” said attorney Jordan Sekulow with the ACLJ, adding that Carter was not a government employee and did not work for the agency that came after her.



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on September 15, 2019

The complaints against Carter are wrong, not just morally, but legally, the ACLJ lawyer explained. While the law prohibits discrimination in advertisements and in decisions about who to rent or sell to, it does not even purport to ban religious speech by real-estate agents. And indeed, not a single allegation of discrimination by a buyer or seller has ever been made against Carter.

“In our lawsuit on Hadassah’s behalf, we’re seeking to get a declaration that Hadassah was justly exercising her First Amendment rights and the Board’s actions were unconstitutional,” Sekulow said on the ACLJ website in a post about the ongoing litigation. “We’re also seeking a permanent injunction against the Virginia Board of Realtors to prevent them from doing to anyone else what they did to Hadassah.”

Sekulow and the ACLJ also urged anyone else facing such abuses by government to contact them for help. “There is no excuse for state agencies to be so hostile toward Christianity,” he said. “This could happen to so many of us. As an attorney I have a license from a state agency...The law is on our side. The Constitution is on our side. We’re standing up for Christians to make sure religious discrimination does not stand.”

The attacks on Christians are a growing problem, though. “Discriminating to prevent discrimination is oxymoronic and counterproductive, but the Left seems determined to do it,” said Sekulow. “No one should have to justify their free speech or their religion to a regulatory body. To threaten someone’s job because they express their faith makes free speech unfree, and so we must fight these assaults on religious liberty aggressively whenever they arise.”

When contacted by *The New American*, Carter said her legal counsel had advised her not to make any comments about the case as litigation proceeds. However, she did have a request for the American people: “Please pray for this case and for all persecuted Christians.” Carter also asked that concerned citizens please share the news with everyone they know and that people sign the petition available the ACLJ’s “Take Action” page. Finally, she said anyone interested in the case could donate to the ACLJ. “God bless you always!” Carter added.

The attack on Carter by Virginia authorities comes amid escalating attacks on Christians and Christianity by government at all levels in America. From coercing businesses to cater to homosexual “weddings” to imprisoning and persecuting public officials for refusing to acknowledge a so-called right to a “homosexual marriage,” the anti-Christian juggernaut marches on. In real estate, the ACLJ said that there have been more and more examples of “Fair Housing Enforcement” agencies seeking to silence Christians.

On the horizon, the threats are becoming ever more severe. Consider, for example, the so-called “Equality” Act. Under the guise of banning “discrimination” against homosexuals and people confused about their gender, the federal legislation — already approved overwhelmingly in the U.S. House of Representatives — [would unleash the full weight of the federal government against Christians](#). Even churches would be forced to submit, with the bill making clear that “religious freedom” is not a defense to persecution under the statute.

Outside of America, meanwhile, persecution of Christians is also escalating, with estimates suggesting that untold thousands are being martyred for their faith each year. In China, for example, Communist Party [authorities are mercilessly arresting, torturing, and terrorizing Christians while knocking down churches](#) and establishing apostate government “churches.” Across much of the world, slaughter of Christians by Islamic extremists — oftentimes backed by governments — has [reached genocidal](#)



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[proportions](#). In areas where the U.S. government has intervened militarily, [Christians are being slaughtered](#).

Even in what was once known as Christendom — nations such as Britain, Canada, and Sweden, for example — Christian evangelists are being imprisoned for “hate speech” merely for pointing out that the Bible identifies homosexual activity as a sin. Simply standing against the mutilation of children’s genitals in a “sex change” surgery [can now get Christians in hot water](#). And based on current trends, it is almost certainly going to get worse before it gets better.

If they get their way, anti-Christian zealots will stop at nothing in their quest to eliminate every last vestige of Christianity and the Bible from public life. And regardless of the outcome of the legal battle in Virginia, Carter will not be the last victim of this hatred. But the fact that persecution is growing even in America — a land founded on principles of religious liberty by devout Christians — is an ominous sign suggesting tribulations yet to come. Be ready.

Photo: D-Keine/iStock/Getty Images Plus

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