In 1993, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) was passed by Congress and signed by then-President, Bill Clinton. It was a resounding echo of the Bill of Rights' determination of a right to religious freedom. But it was short lived--in 1997 the Supreme Court ruled that Congress did not have the authority to apply religious freedom laws to states. In response, 22 states have since passed their own RFRA bills.

During the Trump Administration, the heart of RFRA was restored in government agencies, with an Executive Order (EO) issued in May of 2017 promoting free speech and religious liberty for all government agencies, including the military. This EO was implemented in all agencies of the government. It resulted in a DOJ Religious Liberty Taskforce, an HHS Conscience and Religious Freedom Division, and many other proactive means of ensuring religious freedom rights throughout all areas of government. You can read more about those actions in IFA's Special Report on Religious Freedoms protected here.

Biden redefines reality
This progress vanished within days of the new administration by action of President Biden to redefine "sex," altering the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This shifts the playing field for religious freedom by including qualities that are NOT immutable (sexual orientation and identity choice) for the extra legal protections of this law. This will have a wide ranging impact on believers who are part of the government--including the U.S. Military--or who work with the government. It will justify and force acceptance of radical policies such as boys and girls sharing...
According to Starr, Biden’s championing of HR5, specifically, is antithetical to the pro-liberty Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993.

In the courts
Hostility toward people of faith shows up in many notable court cases where authorities have sued a person of faith, or the person of faith must act to protect their liberty. The Masterpiece Cake Shop lawsuit against baker Jack Phillips, who opted out of baking a cake for a gay wedding (and now faces similar charges for refusing to make a transgender birthday cake). Little Sisters of the Poor involved Catholic nuns required to pay for health care that includes contraception. Their two cases went to the Supreme Court (twice in two cases) and they won both decisions in 2016 and 2020.

The challenges do not stop. Small fights and big fights are taking place--but is it enough? As Judge Ken Starr urges in his exclusive interview with IFA’s Dave Kubal, people of faith need to use the full extent of our legal system to protect our rights, religious or otherwise. The Court system is the means our founders designed to uphold our rights and the Constitution. Believers should not decline to litigate to maintain these rights. There are many legal organizations that are dedicated to fighting violations of religious freedom--many of these organizations are nonprofit. Right now, there are many cases in the courts across the nation, using the legal system to preserve religious freedom.

Three active religious freedom cases that need your prayer:

Jackie Gale, "a University of Alabama-Birmingham student who is being punished for living out her sincerely held religious beliefs regarding mandated childhood vaccines," represented by First Liberty. Pray for this case.

Tanner Cross, a public school teacher in Virginia who voiced concern at a public school board meeting about policies requiring teachers to address students with a “chosen pronoun” unrelated to their biological sex. Cross is represented by Alliance Defending Freedom. Pray for this case.

Christians Engaged, a religious organization in Texas was denied IRS tax exempt status because the IRS determined “Bible teachings” such as sanctity of life, biblical justice, and freedom of speech are “Republican.” Christians Engaged is being represented by First Liberty. Pray for this case.

These three cases are just a few of the many challenges being made in the courts to protect religious freedom.

Pray for these defenders of religious freedom
Here are four organizations who are committed to protecting religious freedom through our legal system. Pray for each organization. Pray for their staffs. Pray for provision so they can continue their mission. More prayer points below.

First Liberty
Kelly Shackelford
Liberty Counsel
Mat Staver
ACLJ
Jay Sekulow
Alliance Defending Freedom
Mike Farris
Thomas More Society
Tom Brejcha

Prayer Points (based on Ken Starr's interview)

- Pray for true freedom over our nation. (2 Cor 3:17)
- Pray blessing on those who fight to uphold religious freedom. (2 Cor 4:8-9)
- Pray we would fully walk in the freedoms we currently have. Pray that believers would not shrink from this and would use our legal system to preserve our freedoms. (1 Peter 2:16)