



CHECK YOUR CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE

WE MUST EQUALLY RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL RELIGIOUS GROUPS

A STAFF EDITORIAL

The choice to wear the clothing of your religion, ignore the language and customs of other religions, and not worry about persecution by hate groups for your beliefs is a privilege. The fact that you can act in a way that doesn't define every single person who identifies with the same belief system as you is a privilege. The ability to seek out clubs, events, schools, and communities dedicated to what is considered the most safe, normal, and right religion is a privilege many of us cannot begin to understand.

In a Christian nation, in a Christian world, the treatment adherents of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Bahá'í, Hinduism, and Taoism receive is that of second-class citizens.

In a country that prides itself on equality and religious tolerance, why is there only a Bible study session for Christians available to students in our school? Why do we not cherish Koran and Tripitaka discussions, Muslim and Jainism support groups, or even atheist socratic seminars in the same way we open our welcoming arms to Christians?

Religion is important, and because of that,

it is also a touchy subject for believers. However, until all Americans can worship as freely and easily as one another, it is our duty to address the difficult issues. It's time to empower one another, remembering the advancement of some does not mean the downfall of others.

The spectrum of privilege extends from people assuming you're a national security

THE FIRST STEP IS ACKNOWLEDGING THAT AN ISSUE EXISTS.

threat in an airport to being unable to study the holy texts of your religion in school. This deep-rooted problem encompasses every church, mosque, and temple in our country, but the solution starts in our own community.

The first step is acknowledging that an issue exists. We must stop claiming there's a "war" on your religion and attacking other people's beliefs because they demand

the same rights you enjoy.

This isn't to say that Christians are bad people for having and using these advantages. In the same way that not all Christians are the same nor defined by the actions of a single person wearing a cross on their neck, not all Muslims are terrorists because of the hijab covering their head.

When our congress is 91% Christian, how can the 30% of non-Christian American citizens have hope that someone is fighting for them?

Christian dominance is so pervasive and unquestioned that it's become unrecognizable as we pledge allegiance to a nation under God, buy groceries with bills touting "In God We Trust", and accept that there will never be a religious study session for non-Christians in our schools.

When you are told every day of your life that your beliefs are inferior to those of the classmate, teacher, American beside you, it takes a toll.

When we, as a country, as a community, and as a school, refuse to start the discussion on religion and privilege, how can we realize the ideals we believe we've already achieved?