

Majority Believes America is a Christian Nation: Poll

What do Americans think about the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment? The Newseum Institute attempt to find out in their annual national survey of American attitudes about the First Amendment. Here are seven figures you should know from the survey: 1. When asked to name the five specific freedoms in the First Amendment, 57 percent of Americans name freedom of speech, followed by 19 percent who say the freedom of religion, 10 percent mention the freedom of the press, 10 percent mention the right to assemble, and 2 percent name the right to petition. Thirty-three percent of Americans cannot name any of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment. 2. About half of respondents (51 percent) agreed that the U.S. Constitution establishes a Christian nation. Women (55 percent) are more likely than men (46 percent) to believe that America was created as a Christian nation. Also, those 50 or older (54 percent) are more likely to think that than their younger peers (37 percent). 3. 54 percent believe the Supreme Court's ruling on same-sex marriage will have no impact on religious freedom. Just under a third (31 percent) feel as though the decision would be harmful to religious freedom, while only 8 percent say it will be good for religious freedom. Republicans (50 percent) are more likely to see this as harmful than either Democrats (19 percent) or independents (24 percent). 4. 38 percent of Americans agreed that business owners should be required to provide service to same-sex couples. Younger adults are more supportive of requiring all businesses to serve same-sex couples: 61 percent of 18-29 year olds, 45 percent of those 30 to 49, and 37 percent of those 50 or older. Also, Democrats (57 percent) are more in agreement with this than are either Republicans (22 percent) or independents (37 percent). Those not practicing a religion (54 percent) are more likely to support this requirement than

Catholics (42 percent), and particularly Protestants (26 percent), and women (41 percent) are more in agreement than men (34 percent). 5. Only 24 percent now think that the news media try to report on news without bias. Of those surveyed, only 7 percent of 18-29 year olds agree that the media try to report without bias, compared to 13 percent of 30-49 year olds and 26 percent of those 50 or older. Also, Democrats (36 percent) are significantly more likely to think that the news media try to be unbiased than do either Republicans (19 percent) or independents (21 percent). 6. An overwhelming 88 percent of Americans agree that people should be allowed to record the activities of the police as long as they do not interfere with police actions and 83 percent agree that video from police body-cams should become part of the public record. 7. 54 percent oppose the idea of allowing the government to secretly spy on individual online messages and phone calls as a means to catch terrorists, while thirty-seven percent are in favor of allowing the government to spy on personal communications to fight terrorism. Republicans (44 percent) are more likely than either Democrats (39 percent) or independents (31 percent) to support government spying on individuals as a way to catch terrorists. *Reprinted from the Acton Institute.*