

VP JD Vance: Defending Religious Freedom in America and Abroad

At the International Religious Freedom Summit, Vice President J.D. Vance delivered a strong message: religious liberty is not just a legal right, but a core principle that shapes nations and communities.

“Religious freedom, of course, is the freedom to practice one’s own faith and act according to one’s own conscience,” Vance states. “And it’s, of course, the bedrock of civil society in the United States of America and across the world.”

Vance traced this right back to early Christian thinkers, particularly the third-century church father Tertullian, who argued, “It is only just and a privilege inherent in human nature that every person should be able to worship according to his own convictions.” Vance credits America’s Founders with preserving this principle, noting that “Thomas Jefferson owned an edition of Tertullian’s collected writings, which he marked up and which today sits in the Library of Congress.”

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For Vance, religious freedom is not limited to Christianity. “The right to religious freedom is protected by the people for everybody, whether you’re a Christian, a Jew, a Muslim, or no faith at all,” he affirms. However, he emphasized that beyond legal protections, faith must be allowed to thrive in everyday life. “One of the wonderful apparent paradoxes of religion is that in connecting us to the sacred and to the universal, it deepens our commitment to the particular—to our neighbors, to our obligations to one another.”

Vance also shared his personal experience with faith.

“My grandmother who raised me was a deeply faithful woman in her own way, but she was skeptical of institutionalized religion and rarely attended Sunday services herself.”

Yet, he saw firsthand the unifying power of religious communities.

“Church was a place and still is where people of different races, different backgrounds, different walks of life came together in commitment to their shared communities.”

Turning to policy, Vance praised President Trump’s record on religious liberty, both at home and abroad. “In his first term, President Trump centered the cause of advancing religious freedom in his foreign policy,” he said, highlighting efforts to protect persecuted Christians and combat anti-Semitism. “You shouldn’t have to leave your faith at the door of your people’s government, and under President Trump’s leadership, you won’t have to.”

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He also touted recent executive actions, including moves to “end the weaponization of the federal government against religious Americans” and “stop the federal censorship used to prevent Americans from speaking their conscience and speaking their mind.”

On foreign policy, he was clear: “How did America get to the point where we’re sending hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars abroad to NGOs that are dedicated to spreading atheism all over the globe? That is not what leadership on protecting the rights of the faithful looks like, and it ends with this administration.”

Vance ended with a sneak peek of what is to come: “The source of religious liberty is the recognition that all of us are equal under the rights and laws of God, and that principle will guide us in the years to come.”

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