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*In a time when the courts have seemed especially hostile to the Constitution and our basic rights as American citizens, this is a major victory. We should celebrate it, but without letting down our guard or our resolve to see our nation once again moored to the Constitution and Bill of Rights. RJ.*

## Victory for Freedom of Speech

By JG

(originally published on October 30, 2015)



On Wednesday, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals completely reversed a lower court's decision and ruled in favor of Evangelical Christians who were arrested for disturbing the peace at the 2012 Arab Festival in Dearborn, Michigan. The Christians had bottles, eggs, and other items hurled at them by Muslims for publicly preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A short video of this episode can be found [here](#).

During this festival, a group of Muslims approached the Christians and asked to hear about the Gospel. The Christians obliged and began sharing about the Bible, Jesus, and their faith. Other Muslims became angry and assaulted the Christians for their speech. The police ended up arresting the Christians, not the Muslims.

The case, ***Bible Believers v. Wayne County***, was brought by the [American Freedom Law Center \(AFLC\)](#) on behalf of the Christians.

On August 27, 2014, a divided, three-judge panel of the Sixth Circuit dismissed the civil rights lawsuit, finding the violent response of the Muslim hecklers justified the Wayne County sheriffs' order to the Christians that they would be arrested for disorderly conduct if they did not leave the festival area.

Yesterday, the Sixth Circuit ruled in favor of the Christians on every issue, completely reversing the lower court opinion, and directing the court to enter judgment in the Christians' favor.

In its decision, the Sixth Circuit ruled the County and the two Deputy Chief defendants were liable for violating the Christians' First Amendment rights to free speech and the free exercise of religion, and for depriving the Christians of the equal protection of the law. The court ruled the individual defendants did not enjoy qualified immunity, and the County was liable as a municipality for the constitutional violations.

In its opinion, the Sixth Circuit stated, in part:

*"In a balance between two important interests-free speech on one hand, and the state's power to maintain the peace on the other-the scale is heavily weighted in favor of the First Amendment. . . . Maintenance of the peace should not be achieved at the expense of the free speech. The freedom to espouse sincerely held religious, political, or philosophical beliefs, especially in the face of hostile opposition, is too important to our democratic institution for it to be abridged simply due to the hostility of reactionary listeners who may be offended by a speaker's message. If the mere possibility of violence were allowed to dictate whether our views, when spoken aloud, are safeguarded by the Constitution, surely the myriad views that animate our discourse would be reduced to the standardization of ideas by the dominant political or community groups. Democracy cannot survive such a deplorable result.*

*"When a peaceful speaker, whose message is constitutionally protected, is confronted by a hostile crowd, the state may not silence the speaker as an expedient alternative to containing or snuffing out the lawless behavior of the rioting individuals. Nor can an officer sit idly on the sidelines-watching as the crowd imposes, through violence, a tyrannical majoritarian rule-only later to claim that the speaker's removal was necessary for his or her own protection."*

In short, this was a complete victory for the Constitution and for all freedom-loving Americans who enjoy the protections of the First Amendment.

The AFLC is first and foremost a public interest litigation firm, which aggressively seeks to advance and defend America's Judeo-Christian heritage in courts all across our Nation. The AFLC's mission is to fight for faith and freedom through litigation, education, and public policy programs.

A short video detailing AFLC's mission and accomplishments can be seen [here](#).

AFLC is comprised of attorney Robert Muise, a combat veteran Marine Officer and expert in Constitutional law, and attorney David Yerushalmi, one of the nation's most knowledgeable attorneys on national security, Constitutional law, as well as Sharia (Islamic Law).

AFLC states on their website: "The strength of our Nation lies in its commitment to a Judeo-Christian heritage and moral foundation and to an enduring faith and trust in God and His Providence. AFLC seeks a return to America's founding commitment to receive God's continued blessing to preserve the soul of this great Nation."

This ruling demonstrates there are still bastions of sanity in the American judicial system where liberty under law still reigns in America, and where judges committed to justice win over the progressives trying to destroy our nation.

Let us celebrate this significant victory today and raise a glass to the courage of the Americans who withstood the attack, the AFLC for its work to defend our liberties, and the Court for doing what it should always do - rule judiciously.

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This article was originally published on October 30, 2015 on [Understanding the Threat](https://www.understandingthethreat.com/victory-for-freedom-of-speech/) here:  
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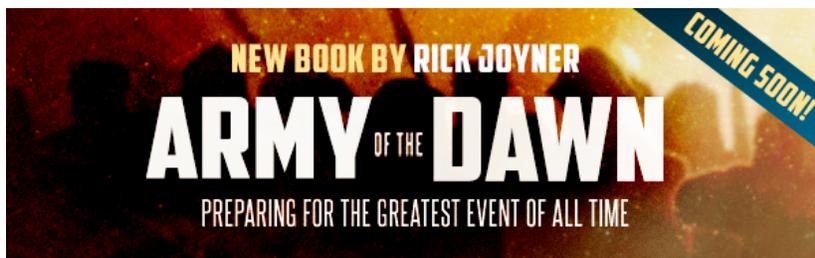


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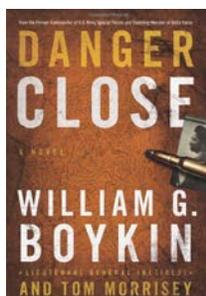
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