

# Not a Single Christian Church Left in Afghanistan, says State Department

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(AP Photo.)(CNSNews.com) -- There is not a single, public Christian church left in Afghanistan, according to the U.S. State Department.

This reflects the state of religious freedom in that country ten years after the United States first invaded it and overthrew its Islamist Taliban regime. In the intervening decade, U.S. taxpayers have spent \$440 billion to support Afghanistan's new government and more than 1,700 U.S. military personnel have died serving in that country.

The last public Christian church in Afghanistan was razed in March 2010, according to the State Department's latest International Religious Freedom Report. The report, which was released last month and covers the period of July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, also states that “there were no Christian schools in the country.”

“There is no longer a public Christian church; the courts have not upheld the church's claim to its 99-year lease, and the landowner destroyed the building in March [2010],” reads the State Department report on religious freedom. “[Private] chapels and churches for the international community of various faiths are located on several military bases, PRTs [Provincial Reconstruction Teams], and at the Italian embassy. Some citizens who converted to Christianity as refugees have returned.”

In recent times, freedom of religion has declined in Afghanistan, according to the State Department. “The government’s level of respect for religious freedom in law and in practice declined....

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