

Threat Against Freedom of Speech Is Real - How To Protect Yourself With Parler

January 9, 2021 - Points of view can change radically over time. Sometimes, they can change radically over a very short time period. The way that happens is through the exchange of ideas. And ideas can only be exchanged if speech is protected. The founders of this country knew this and they enshrined that concept in the First Amendment to the US Constitution.

Tweet

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(function() {
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
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s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();
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(function() {
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);
})();
```

Among other things included in that amendment are freedom of religion, freedom to assemble and the right to petition the government. Along with freedom of speech, all of these rights are currently being threatened; both by government and by industry. And that should frighten you regardless of your political views.

Without the First Amendment, the civil rights movement in the United States never would have happened. Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly were essential. Women's suffrage - the right to vote - never would have happened. The same rights came into play in that battle. While people opposing civil rights or the women's vote, probably had points of view that you disagree with, they were not shut down from expressing those points of view. If there are any lessons to come out of these two battles, the one that we should all take home is that the answer to objectionable speech isn't censorship. It is more speech! By that, I mean that if you oppose someone's position then you need to overcome that position with a well articulated argument and express yourself openly. And in this country, you should be able to do that without fear of reprisal.

But that isn't what is happening now. Within the past 48 hours, we've had major tech companies—Facebook and Twitter specifically—take down accounts from the President of the United States simply because they don't like his point of view. Facebook has also started purging accounts from lesser known people with similar points of view. Within the past 24 hours, Google removed the Parler app from its play store. (If you are not familiar with Parler, read on.) And Apple has now told Parler that unless they stop allowing free speech, their app will be banned from the App Store.

We also have people in government now saying that people with certain ideas need to be banned from going online or expressing those ideas.

Again, regardless of point of view, that should scare everyone to death. As you read this, we know that there is a 50/50 chance that you don't agree with the positions of the President. That's your right. But what if someone told you that you couldn't express that position?

As I said at the beginning of this piece, points of view can change radically over time. What if that happened and the political leanings of certain corporations changed 180 degrees over the next four years. Will you have the ability to express your opinions then? The answer to that question is "probably not," if things keep going the way that they are now. That is, unless you do something radical yourself. That's where Parler comes in.

Parler is a social network that is built on the premise that free speech is good. It doesn't matter if you are middle of the road, a socialist or conservative. You're free to express yourself as you see fit. You can share any link, video or idea that you want to without fear of having your account frozen or being banned. But as of today, getting the Parler app on your Android phone is a bit more tricky than it was a couple of days ago. And it looks like if you use an Apple device, it will be more difficult soon. Fortunately, there are work arounds.

Getting the Parler app is fairly simple. Just go to www.parler.com. At the very bottom of their home page, you'll see a message that reads "Download Today" next to the symbols for Apple and Android. As of this writing, the Apple symbol still takes you to the App Store. But the Android symbol takes you to a direct download link. That means that the actual application will be downloaded directly to your device. We suspect that will also be the case for Apple in the next few days.

Parler Installation Procedures

While downloading the app is still simple, installing isn't going to be the same experience as if you went through either Apple or Google's stores. Both Apple and Google sell their phones with a default setting that only allows you to install applications from their stores. You'll have to change those settings before you can install.

Installing on Android

To install Parler on Android, first download the app and then go into your Android settings. You can do this by dragging down the bar at the upper portion of your screen and clicking on the small gear icon. Scroll down until you see "Security" settings and click on them. Then click on the setting that allows installation of apps from unknown sources. Once you have done this, you are ready to install.

Now find the downloaded App. To do this, you'll need a file browser on your phone. A good program for this is Google Files. It may already be on your phone but if not, you can find it here:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.nbu.files>. Once you have installed it, open the program and go to downloaded files. Click on the file titled `parler.apk` and the installation will begin. From there, all you have to do is register.

Installing on Apple

Again, as of this writing, you can still install from the App Store. Our recommendation is to do that right away. Even if you don't register for a Parler account immediately, you'll still have the app on your phone.

If you don't do that, you'll need to download the application. Then open your phone's settings and navigate to Settings, General, Device Management, Trust and then select Parler. You should then be able to install the downloaded application.

Why is ACCESS writing about this particular subject?

If you think it is odd for a website that focusses on credit, home finance and financial privacy to write about free speech, then just consider this. We've spent years criticizing politicians in both parties for their positions on things such as personal privacy, financial privacy, usury laws, bank regulations, taxes, etc. We've leveled harsh criticisms of policies from every single administration since Bill Clinton. And our positions haven't always been popular with the political class in this country.

The idea that companies such as Google, Facebook, Apple and Twitter could shut down the exchange of ideas that we generate is frightening. And the thought that politicians who don't like a particular idea could pick up the phone and call these companies and have them limit the circulation of that idea, or get rid of it on their platform entirely, is completely reprehensible.

So I'm personally jointing Parler today myself. And I'm going to ask my 8,000 or so Twitter follwers to do the same thing. We either need to stand up for free speech now, or lose it forever.

by Jim Malmberg

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