

**News and Current Events :: Russian religion law said to 'undercut' missions****Russian religion law said to 'undercut' missions - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2016/7/13 22:41**

MOSCOW (BP) -- A new Russian law that prohibits evangelism and preaching outside state-sanctioned sites reminds New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary professor Jake Roudkovski of his days as a youth in the Soviet Union.

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"Baptist churches in Russia will survive" the law signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin July 6 and set to take effect July 20, Roudkovski, associate professor of evangelism and pastoral leadership, told Baptist Press. Such oppression "is nothing new to them.... They will stay faithful to the Gospel."

Still, the law "will significantly undercut all of the missionary activities," though it "will not stop altogether," said Roudkovski, who left the Soviet Union at age 17 but has returned on mission trips.

The law, part of a package of anti-terrorism measures, will amend a 1997 Russian religion law to ban preaching, praying, proselytizing and disseminating religious materials outside state-sanctioned religious sites, according to a news release from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

Russians who share their faith or distribute certain types of religious messages through mass print, broadcast or online media may face fines up to \$15,000. Under the law, foreign missionaries must prove they were invited by state-registered religious groups and must operate only in regions where their sponsoring organizations are registered. Missionary groups found in violation face deportation and major fines, according to USCIRF.

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