

Onward (anti) Christian Soldiers

Friday, October 30, 2015

<http://blog.faithandfreedom.us/2015/10/onward-anti-christian-soldiers.html#more>



The Bremerton (WA) School District announced Wednesday they are suspending coach Joe Kennedy, because Kennedy has been warned to stop saying a private prayer after football games---and he has not done so.

A letter has been sent to Bremerton School District by 47 members the US Congress, expressing their deep concern over the matter of coach Kennedy. Not a single Washington State politician signed the letter.

This week, a teacher told a 7th grader, in the classroom, to admit "God is not real." She wouldn't do it and told her parents.

The list is long, and growing longer, of individuals who are persecuted for living out their personal biblical faith in Jesus Christ---sometimes they are only mocked, sometimes they lose their business, or job---some have been thrown in jail.

The anti-Christian parade continues down America's main street. A majority of Americans take no "pride" in this parade.

Billy Graham tells us how to respond.

The [Bremerton School District](#) has suspended ---removed---Coach Joe Kennedy before tonight's football game, thus preventing him from offering a personal prayer to God after the game.

Officials say, "The suspension was necessitated because of Kennedy's refusal to comply with district directives that he refrain from engaging in overt, public religious displays of the football field while on duty as a football coach."

They say "his conduct poses a risk that the district will be liable for violating federal and state constitutional rights of students"---while they violate Coach Kennedy's constitutional rights.

[A letter](#) has been sent to the Bremerton School administration by 47 members of the US Congress--- both House and Senate--- expressing grave concern over the school district's actions.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 27, 2015

Aaron Leavell
Superintendent, Bremerton School District
134 Marion Avenue N.
Bremerton, WA 98312

John Polm
Principal, Bremerton High School
1500 13th St.
Bremerton, WA 98337

Dear Superintendent Leavell and Principal Polm,

We write to express our concern over reports that the Bremerton School District views Coach Joseph Kennedy's tradition of quietly praying at the fifty yard line after the conclusion of school football games as unlawful under the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution.

Among the most basic rights that Americans enjoy are the free exercise of religion, free speech, and the freedom of association. The Establishment Clause exists to ensure that the government cannot affirmatively impose or elevate one religion over another. However, it does not prohibit the government from referencing religion altogether, nor does it require that government officials proactively scrub all references of religion from the public square. Rather, the Establishment Clause ensures both that the government does not show preference to a certain religion, and that the government does not take away an individual's ability to exercise religion.

The Supreme Court recently stated, "It is an elemental First Amendment principle that government may not coerce its citizens to support or participate in any religion or its exercise." *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 134 S. Ct. 1811 (2014). The Court went on to state that "an Establishment Clause violation is not made out any time a person experiences a sense of affront from the expression of contrary views . . ." *Id.*

These guiding principles from the Court were written in the context of a challenge to a small town's practice of opening legislative sessions with prayer. The challengers did not like that most of the prayers offered were Christian in nature, even though participation was voluntary and anyone was welcome to offer a prayer. However, the Court rejected the feeble argument that a reasonable observer would believe that the government was favoring Christianity over other religions. The content of what was volunteered was irrelevant, so long as all were welcome.

These crucial principles are no less applicable here. The Supreme Court has made clear that the voluntary observance of a brief prayer at the beginning of a legislative session—a tradition that is also embraced by both the United States Senate and House of Representatives—does not in and of itself present an Establishment Clause problem. Likewise, the mere act of a single individual kneeling alone after the conclusion of a game to quietly pray coerces no one, even when that individual is a school employee. That others may choose to join him of their own free will is irrelevant, and an exercise of their own constitutional freedoms.

The District acknowledged in its letter to Coach Kennedy's legal counsel that he "is free to engage in religious activity, including prayer, even while on duty, so long as doing so does not interfere with

performance of his job duties, and does not constitute District endorsement of religion." We would urge you to also consider the fact that Coach Kennedy's personal actions are not only non-coercive, but also admirable and respectable as they represent his commitment to the welfare of the young men on his team.

The Establishment Clause does not require quarantining private, non-coercive religious expression to private quarters or off-duty hours. Thank you for your service to the students and families of Bremerton.

Sincerely,


J. RANDY FORBES (VA-04)
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Congressional Prayer Caucus


JAMES LANKFORD (OK)
United States Senator
Co-Chair, Congressional Prayer Caucus


JAMES M. INHOFE (OK)
United States Senator


STEVE DAINES (MT)
United States Senator


DAN NEWHOUSE (WA-04)
Member of Congress


ROBERT ADERHOLT (AL-04)
Member of Congress

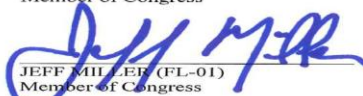

GREGG HARPER (MS-03)
Member of Congress


MIKE CONAWAY (TX-11)
Member of Congress


TIM WALBERG (MI-07)
Member of Congress


DANIEL WEBSTER (FL-10)
Member of Congress


VICKY HARJO (MO-04)
Member of Congress


JEFF MILLER (FL-01)
Member of Congress


ROBERT WITTMAN (VA-01)
Member of Congress


GLENN "GT" THOMPSON (PA-05)
Member of Congress

The letter was sent Monday to Superintendent Aaron Leavell and Bremerton High School Principal John Polm.

The letter is linked above. I encourage you to read it. Please note that not a single Washington state elected official---Republican or Democrat, had the courage to sign the letter.

Also on Monday, [Jordan Wooley](#), a 12 year old 7th grader [from Texas], says, "Today I was given an assignment in school that questions my faith and told me that God was not real."

She says her teacher said regarding the multiple choice assignment, that anyone who put "fact or opinion" as the answer regarding God's existence was "wrong and that God is a myth."

She told her parents and the school board this week that the teacher insisted God cannot be proven. She also said one of her classmates also said God is a fact, and she too was told that was the wrong answer.

In fact, the teacher "crossed the answer out several times, telling her it was completely wrong." School Superintendent Alton Frailey called Jordan "brave" and thanked her for bringing this to the attention of the district.

He said, "I am truly sorry you feel your faith was questioned," promising the incident would be "worked on per district policies and procedures."

The operative word is "feel" your faith has been questioned.

The school district has now put out a [lengthy letter](#) to all students and staff, explaining the situation from the school's point of view. The letter is included in the link above---you can read it.

The letter read:

Yesterday, October 26, at the end of the school day, two West Memorial Junior High parents contacted the school's principal to share their concern over a classroom activity that they felt questioned students' religious beliefs. The school principal immediately responded to the parents by informing them that she would investigate and meet with the teacher the following morning. At the conclusion of the investigation today, the principal determined that the classroom activity included an item that was unnecessary for achieving the instructional standard. The activity, which was intended to encourage critical thinking skills and dialogue by engaging students in an exercise wherein they identified statements as fact, opinion, or common assertion was not intended to question or challenge any student's religious beliefs as reported by some media outlets.

The teacher is distraught by this incident, as some commentary has gone as far as to vilify her without knowing her, her Christian faith, or the context of the classroom activity. Still, this does not excuse the fact that this ungraded activity was ill-conceived and because of that, its intent had been misconstrued. As a result, the activity will no longer be used by the school, and the teacher has been advised and reprimanded. The school regrets any misconceptions that may have resulted from this teacher-developed classroom activity and assures its school community that the religious beliefs of all students and staff are welcomed and valued at West Memorial Junior High.

In my mind, they are turning the incident from an assault on a 12 year old's biblical faith, to a misunderstanding, highlighting the pain and stress this has caused the teacher who told the 7th grade student to admit God is a myth.

You will note that the letter from the district to teachers and students says, "The teacher is distraught by this incident, as some commentary has gone as far as to vilify her without knowing her, her Christian faith, or the context of the classroom activity."

The letter also says, "The activity was intended to encourage critical thinking skills and dialogue by engaging students..." The district says the teacher "did not intend to challenge any student's religious beliefs as reported by some media outlets."

If this is true, and I personally find it very difficult to believe, that raises an equally troubling question.

Is the teacher not smart or wise enough to know that telling a 7th grader to confess that "God is not real" is not appropriate?

And if the purpose really was to "teach critical thinking skills," did she use any other religious figures? Did she ask any of the Muslim kids to denounce Muhammad? Or Buddhists to denounce Buddha?

The authorities then took this a step further, and promised that "should media be on campus tomorrow during arrival or dismissal, rest assured there will be additional patrols on the site to aide with traffic control and ensure safety and security of students and staff," implying that the school may be under assault because the 7th grader told her parents.

Lilly Skotak was also in the same class. She told her mother the same story. Her mother, Stacey, said, "This makes me furious and why I wanted to find out why this was even in a public school. There is no need for that question."

That's the point.

The only "need" for that question is for purposes of indoctrination---or absolute ignorance on the part of the teacher. I do not believe the teacher is ignorant.

In the letter mentioned above, U.S. senator James Lankford says people have become afraid of faith and prayer.

Sen. Lankford says he thinks that's part of the problem in Washington state.

He says, "A Christian coach can pray over their meal at lunch, can pray and kneel down at the end of a game and quite frankly," he told Beltway Buzz, "they can kneel down during the 4th quarter before a last second field goal and pray on the sidelines. That's just the nature of our own individual faith and they need to be protected."

[Billy Graham](#) warns of times like these. He says there is no biblical evidence that we, here in America, will escape persecution.

So how will we respond when Christians here at home are pressured to deny Christ?

Graham list's five ways to fortify yourself so that you are able to stand when that day comes.

1. Make sure of your relationship to God.

Prepare to meet God. Have you been to the cross where Christ shed His blood for your sins? Have you had the past forgiven? Have you come by faith, confessing that you are a sinner and receiving Christ as your Savior?

2. Walk with God in your daily life.

If you are walking with God now, when times of crisis come you will be prepared to meet them head on. God has not promised to deliver us from trouble, but he will walk with us through it.

3. Assimilate Scripture.

Fortify yourself with the Word of God. Begin reading, studying and memorizing Scripture as never before. The Bible says, "Stand therefore, having your waist girded with truth" (Ephesians 6:14).

4. Pray Always.

If Christianity is to survive in a world filled with materialism, the church must have a revival of prayer. As individuals, we must repent of prayerlessness. The prayer meeting must become the vital institution it was when evangelical Christianity was the mightiest force in the world.

5. Meditate on Christ.

We must learn again to practice the presence of God. Christ must be vitally real to us if we are to prove loyal to Him in the hours of crisis.

Be Prayerful. Be Strong in your Faith. Be Informed. Be Blessed.