

General Topics :: \*kids and prayer

**\*kids and prayer - posted by searchin, on: 2007/2/26 8:59**

U.S. Supreme Court ENGEL v. VITALE, 370 U.S. 421 (1962) 370 U.S. 421 ENGEL ET AL. v. VITALE ET AL. CERTIORARI TO THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NEW YORK.

No. 468.

Argued April 3, 1962.

Decided June 25, 1962.

Because of the prohibition of the First Amendment against the enactment of any law "respecting an establishment of religion," which is made applicable to the States by the Fourteenth Amendment, state officials may not compose an official state prayer and require that it be recited in the public schools of the State at the beginning of each school day - even if the prayer is denominationally neutral and pupils who wish to do so may remain silent or be excused from the room while the prayer is being recited. Pp. 422-436.

There are many students across the country who really believe that, somehow, it's against the law to pray in school. It's not surprising if you listen to what many voices, from both sides of the debate, are saying about prayer in school. All too common phrases like, "They've taken prayer out of the public school." Or, "God has been removed from the classroom," have left many mis-informed and has led to a distorted view of the facts concerning prayer in the public school.

#### The Beginning

In 1962 In the Case Engel v. Vitale, the Supreme Court passed a law which states, "The act of leading students in prayer was ruled unconstitutional, even if the prayer was denominationally neutral and pupils who wish to do so may remain silent or be excused from the room while the prayer is being recited" (Supreme Court Case Engel v. Vitale, p 422-436 Miller, para. 4)

This case came about when a school district in New Hyde Park, New York directed the School District's principal to cause the following prayer to be said aloud by each class in the presence of a teacher at the beginning of each school day: "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country."

The State of New York authorized a short, voluntary prayer for recitation at the start of each school day. The question that was presented in court was: Does the reading of a nondenominational prayer at the start of the school day violate the "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment? The answer the court reached was, Yes. The court decided that by providing the prayer, New York officially approved religion. Thus prayers led by, and sanctioned by, school officials was prohibited.

Fortunately, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects both believers and nonbelievers by mandating government neutrality between belief and nonbelief. The government-- through its proxy, the educators and administrators who facilitate our schools, may not lead children in prayer or force them to pray a certain way. However, all children have the right to pray voluntarily before, during, or after school, and non-religious children do not have to pray at all.

During free time at school, whether it's lunch, in between classes, or any other time of the day when you are able to talk to your friends you can also talk to God, and you can talk to your friends about God. Kids all over the country are taking advantage of opportunities to tell their classmates about God's love. When your friends are talking about their newest CD, I-pod, or the coolest web-site they've seen, you can use that time to tell them the good news of Jesus.

Not only will the school allow you to pray during these times but, in case you're wondering, you can read your Bible in school as well. In fact you'll find a copy of the Bible in just about every school and public library across the nation.

No one in America has outlawed prayer or the Bible...not even in the public school.

Personal prayer never has and never could be outlawed in public schools the first amendment to the Constitution gives us the right to religious freedom in this country. Students can pray and read the Bible. The law is clear on this point, and we are unable to point to any credible authority on either side of the issue that thinks otherwise.

Religious activity in the public schools has been growing in recent years. In the last several decades many religious groups have placed increased interest in student evangelism, and have established thousands of prayer and Bible study clubs in the public schools. Such activity is protected, as it should be, by the Equal Access Amendment, which guarantees students the right to form religious clubs to the same extent they have the right to participate in other extra-curricular activities. They can't make you pray, but they won't keep you from praying either.

This case first came to court in 1962 and twenty-eight years later there was a group of teens who gathered for a retreat.

During the retreat they felt burdened to pray for their fellow students. They gathered around the flagpoles of three separate schools to pray. The teens prayed for their friends, the school, and school leaders. God birthed from this the idea that has come to be known as, "See You At the Pole." On September 12, 1990, 45,000 teenagers gathered at the flagpole in four different states to pray before school started that morning. One-year later one million students from Boston to California gathered at 7:00 a.m. to pray prior to the start of school. This ministry has continued to grow over the years since. Now more than three million students from coast-to-coast and around the world gather to pray one day a year. Students not only meet once a year at the flagpoles of their schools but there are more and more school football teams that will gather for student-led and student-initiated prayer at high school football games. This shows that there is a desire to be able to pray at school. The Congress may have removed the traditional time of prayer that was observed during the school day but students have found other ways to include prayer and God in their school day. Proving, like Daniel, if you want to pray...nothing can stand in your way.

Check out...

- \*Free Exercise Clause and the 14 amendment
- \*The Constitution
- \*Establishment Clause
- \*The Equal Access Amendment

**Re: \*kids and prayer - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/8/23 1:48**

couple years ago I need see at the poll with younger kids.. I didn;t do but I help them before I think it a good thing