

**News and Current Events :: Texas Legislative panel advances Bible-in-schools bill****Texas Legislative panel advances Bible-in-schools bill - posted by ccchhrrriiss () , on: 2007/4/20 9:25****Texas Legislative panel advances Bible bill as classes made optional**

This really made my day!

Republicans in the Texas Legislature introduced a bill that would require Texas high schools to teach the Bible. A panel passed the Democrat-controlled Public Education Committee's approval -- with certain changes. The panel wanted the courses to be optional (a decision of each local District). While this might prevent some of the more intrinsically liberal districts in Austin, Dallas and Houston from offering the Bible courses (as a text), this is a major victory!

The teaching of the Bible has been legal in Texas schools for a few years (one of the first measures since the Republicans took over the legislature). As an undergraduate student, I was able to take several Bible courses at a local church to fulfill my "humanities and human science" requirements in my degree plan. They were wonderful classes (filled with curious non-believers)! However, many public school districts were worried that the classes might not withstand court challenges from certain anti-religion groups. This decision makes the opportunity far more credible. The rules committee agreed to the classes upon two criterium:

1. Optional for the local school districts
2. Must be "religion neutral" (taught from a social or historical perspective).

Due to the conservative nature of the Supreme Court -- favoring State and local rights -- following the changes since the latest justices were appointed by President Bush, it is unlikely any challenge would be successful.

(<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/metro/stories/MYSA042007.9A.lege.bible.33720de.html>) Click here to read the full article!

Pray that the children in Texas schools will be offered such courses. It is ironic that certain groups removed the Bible in many state schools -- even as a literature book -- yet forced students to read much more controversial and explicit books. Texas schools are permitted to allow groups like Gideons to still hand out Bibles. Perhaps now more students would be likely to accept and read one.

:-)

**Re: Texas Legislative panel advances Bible-in-schools bill, on: 2007/4/20 9:53**

This is great news. I must admit tho that I would have reservations about the government schools teaching theology to my kids. But other than that, I think this is a positive step.

But we homeschool... every topic we cover is intertwined with scripture.

Krispy

**Re: Texas Legislative panel advances Bible-in-schools bill - posted by iansmith () , on: 2007/4/20 10:22**

I'm not so happy about this.

I can just imagine a bunch of highschool kids forced to read the bible -possibly taught by a someone who doesn't believe it at all. It could do more to harden their hearts to scripture than encourage them to know Jesus.

I have a sinking feeling that they're going to 'teach moral values' out of the bible and neglect the God behind them. Or teach it critically to show the foundations of American society and 'how progressive we are since then.'

This could also open up to the door to the Koran and other religious documents being forcefully taught in public schools.

This is not positive, this is dangerous and Texas is playing with fire.

**Re:, on: 2007/4/20 10:37**

I agree w/ Ian, tho I'm not as pessimistic about it.

Personally, the ideal way for this to happen is for the school to teach the literary value of the Bible, the historicity of the Bible, the geography of the Bible... and leave theology alone. I think there would be a tremendous spiritual danger in forcing teachers to teach theology, and allowing the government to teach theology.

But exposing kids to the Bible... I don't see that as bad. It's not perfect, but it's better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick.

I agree teaching the morals of the Bible without the God of the Bible is not good. But having legislation that is pro-active toward scripture is certainly not bad. In most states legislation is tremendously against scripture, and we whine and complain about that.... so when TX is pro-active toward scripture, we still whine and complain about it.

I think it's positive, but I also recognize some of the pitfalls of it. The church needs to interject itself into this, and ensure that as students are exposed to scripture there are believers there to guide those who are searching for God. This is a tremendous opportunity for Christian students to step up and make a real difference in their schools.

Krispy

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2007/4/20 10:50**

Hi iansmith...

Quote:

-----  
iansmith wrote:

I'm not so happy about this.

I can just imagine a bunch of highschool kids forced to read the bible -possibly taught by a someone who doesn't believe it at all. It could do more to harden their hearts to scripture than encourage them to know Jesus.

I have a sinking feeling that they're going to 'teach moral values' out of the bible and neglect the God behind them. Or teach it critically to show the foundations of American society and 'how progressive we are since then.'

This could also open up to the door to the Koran and other religious documents being forcefully taught in public schools.

This is not positive, this is dangerous and Texas is playing with fire.

-----  
Ummm...I take it that you didn't actually read my post OR the article. The students will NOT be "forced" to read the Bible. They will be ALLOWED to take a course in Biblical studies if they so choose. Doctrinal issues will not be taught, except from a historic and social perspective. Many liberal Texas public schools already teach classes in Feminism, Sexuality, and even Gay/Lesbian issues. This will allow an alternative class to be taught that might have a much greater and more spiritual impact.

I am not a Baptist, but I took several undergraduate courses in Biblical studies (Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, History of the Prophets, and History of the Texts courses) as part of my required "humanities and human science" courses. I was able to choose other classes, but I chose to take the Bible classes (which were taught by a local Baptist pastor who served as a Religion professor). They were wonderful classes. My classes were filled with non-Christian college students. I personally watched the effect that the Bible had on their lives -- even when taught from a completely historical perspective. Several of those non-Christians are now wholeheartedly serving God.

When the Bible was first removed from America's public schools (particularly during the early to mid 1960s), much of the rationale was due to supposed "forced" instruction from denominational or doctrinal perspectives. However, states went much farther and removed prayer and the Word of God completely. We have seen the results. I have a strong inclination that this can have a powerful impact on the state's children. Even if most children decide to not take the class, it still reminds them that the Word of God is "still around" IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL!

For that, I rejoice!

:-)