

Prayer in School Affects all of Society

By Bruce Malone

Since prayer was eliminated from the public schools, the quality of education has shown a steady statistical decline. Is there a link between the two?

Humanism assumes that the supernatural does not exist and that reality must be discovered purely from man's reasoning. Our public school system has been operating on this foundation since prayer was removed in 1962. Returning prayer to school would be an affront to this philosophy because prayer acknowledges the existence of someone greater than man.

Allowing prayer in school sets an important standard. It tells students that they are more than just a collection of chemicals and energy that happened to be occupying space and time. Prayer is an action which proclaims that life is more than saving the environment or accumulating wealth. The fervency with which school prayer is opposed is not because the ACLU (an anti-Christian legal group) is trying to protect atheists from being indoctrinated by religion. It is opposed because it represents the antithesis to the beliefs of those who set policy for much of our public school system. Prayer is a frontal attack on the notion that mankind is in autonomous control of his own destiny and an insult to those who believe

that friends, possessions, or power can bring meaning or joy.

A primary purpose of public education is to shape good citizens. This involves more than just the memorization of facts. Most Americans are in favor of prayer in public school because they realize that there is something to be gained from the open acknowledgment of God's existence. Morals can only be built on the basis that a moral source - God - exists. Once acknowledgment of God's existence is removed, there is no absolute basis for morals, and a free society drifts toward anarchy. Since prayer was removed from public school classrooms in 1962, we have had a six-fold increase in violent crime, our divorce rate has tripled, births to single mothers have increased five-fold, the teenage suicide rate has tripled, and SAT scores (standardized college entrance test) have dropped 80 points (approximately 10%).¹ The removal of prayer may not be the only cause of social ills, but the negative trends are certainly a symptom of the spiritual decline which is at their root.

What a hypocritical message we send to our children when we allow laws to be passed which limit the free expression of speech in public by banning public prayer in classrooms. Federal and Supreme Court

judges should be impeached who undermine the freedoms upon which this country was founded. The situation has become so absurd that congressional prayers cannot be voluntarily read in a school building.²

Our nation was founded on the freedom to publicly acknowledge God's existence. Allowing prayer in schools will improve, not detract from a student's understanding of the universe. Our experiment with replacing affirmation of God's existence with atheistic humanism has been a dismal failure. Whenever the opportunity arises to support the public acknowledgment of God by prayer (or any other means), it benefits all of society to take a vocal stand. As Edmund Burke correctly noted in 1795, "**The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.**" As with all truths, this is still applicable today.

1. Bill Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, published by the Heritage Foundation, 1993.
2. 1970 Supreme Court Case, *State Board of Education vs. Board of Education of Netcong*.

A complete set of articles examining science and reality from a Christian perspective can be found at SearchfortheTruth.org and in the book [Search for the Truth](#) by Bruce Malone.