

Did Melania Trump Mock Christianity With Her Public Prayer?

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

So goes the first part of the most well-known prayer in the world, the Lord’s Prayer, given to us 2,000 years ago by Jesus Himself. Who would ever think this beloved prayer—said by billions of people, for thousands of years—would be considered controversial?

But apparently, it is. Especially when prayed by the first lady of the United States at an event organized by and for her husband, President Donald Trump.

At the Melbourne, Florida, rally on Saturday (Feb. 18), Melania Trump walked up to the presidential podium, thanked the crowd and, with her husband by her side, said something I can’t remember any first lady or president doing in recent memory. She said simply, “Let us pray,” and then read the Lord’s Prayer in its entirety.

At first, the crowd didn’t seem to know what was happening, but then it quieted down. Many closed their eyes and joined her in praying. When she was done, the crowd erupted in spontaneous applause.

Yet so many have now chosen to criticize and politicize it.

When I posted a link to the video of the prayer on my Facebook page, more than 750,000 people viewed it, and thousands left comments. As usual, many comments were positive; however, others were negative and some were outright hostile:

- “How come she had to read it? ... Hmmm”
- “I saw it, WHAT A MOCKERY. The Lord’s prayer is not a tool to be used for political gain”
- “Fake! Very sad how they use God. Brainwashing people to the fullest.”

Don’t you think it’s time to hit the pause button, folks? There are moments that call on us to put politics aside.

Our first lady, shouldering the new weight of her title and position, took a courageous stand and led 9,000 people in a prayer for God’s help and assistance in our nation. I thought it was beautiful, and I would say the same if it had been first lady Laura Bush or first lady Michelle Obama standing at that podium.

I recently had the privilege of praying for our military and first responders at the Washington National Cathedral the day after the inauguration.

Also during that service, the first lady was similarly moved by our shared Christian faith when a young lady named Marlana VanHoose sang the hymn “How Great Thou Art.” VanHoose, who is blind and has cerebral palsy, delivered the most unforgettable moment of the service.

She sang the words powerfully and with great conviction. She could not see us, but we will never forget seeing her that morning, proclaiming, “Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee/How great Thou art, how great Thou art.”

VanHoose’s song was met with tears from the first lady, who rose to her feet, first among a crowd of hundreds. The standing ovation that followed will be cemented in the memory of many who attended that service.

Our nation’s pundits ought to have more grace, and if they refuse to treat the first lady’s office with common decency,

then they ought to at least honor the prayer she prayed.

Although there are thousands of other examples, I especially remember how that same prayer brought strength and courage to a particular American hero, Todd Beamer.

His courage on Sept. 11, 2001, will go down in the annals of history. A recording recovered after □United Airlines 93 crashed in a Pennsylvania field captured his praying the Lord's Prayer just before storming the cockpit, overcoming the terrorists and saving countless other lives in the process.

This is what I thought of when I heard the first lady boldly pray again the powerful words of Jesus. {eo}

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