

Why This Year's #BringYourBible to School Day Might Be the Most Important Ever

Recently, administrators at East Lake Elementary School in Henry County, Ga., ordered the removal of anything remotely religious from all public school buildings.

The directive sent to all students, staff, and faculty read: "You are hereby directed to remove all items which contain religious symbols, such as crosses, printed Bibles, angels, Bible verses, printed prayers and biblical quotations from the common areas, hallways, classrooms and office of East Lake Elementary School.

"Further ... religious and biblical references should not be included in notes to parents, email signature lines or any other correspondence sent on behalf of East Lake Elementary School. Finally, please remember that all references to holiday parties should comply with the Henry County School District's Policy, Procedure and Practices for Holidays."

It's hardly the first time the religious liberties of Americans have been trampled in the public school system, and it will hardly be the last. In fact, the incidence of First Amendment violations in the name of "separation of Church and State" is sharply on the rise as secularist-atheist influences in education and the judiciary are now having a direct impact.

Here are just a few of the hundreds of recent examples:

- A police officer was dispatched to a 7-year-old boy's home after he shared Scripture verses and Bible stories with friends during free time.

- A 12-year-old student was instructed to give an “All About Me” PowerPoint presentation to her sixth-grade class, but when she wanted to include a slide with her favorite Bible verse, she was told Bible verses were banned.
- Elementary students in Kentucky were looking forward to their performance of “A Charlie Brown Christmas”—until they learned school officials planned to censor Bible verses about the birth of Jesus read by the character, Linus.

“Students don’t lose their religious freedoms when they arrive at school in the morning,” Focus on the Family President Jim Daly said. “The First Amendment recognizes the rights of students to talk about their faith in school and read their Bible outside of classroom time. ‘Bring Your Bible to School Day’ encourages children and teens to understand their religious freedoms and to be a voice of hope and bring their whole selves to the classroom.”

That’s why this year’s Bring Your Bible to School Day just might be the most important ever. Thursday, for a third year in a row, more than 300,000 Christian students will bring their Bibles to school, to read from them, and to share them with their friends and other students.

The project has lined up some powerful assistance. For a second year, Michael Tait, lead singer of the group Newsboys, has helped promote the event, and the band will give away tickets to an upcoming concert to one student who has signed up for the event.

Also, Alliance Defending Freedom has pledged to take the cases of any students whose rights are violated as a result of the event. ADF has also put together a memorandum for students to bring to school that outlines their rights under the First Amendment, particularly as they pertain to #BringYourBible.