

10-Year Old Vindicated for Choosing God Over Michael Jackson

When 10-year-old Erin Shead received a school assignment to write about her idol, it was an easy decision: She chose to write about God.

However, when young Erin asked her teacher if she could write about God, she was told no. That night, after speaking with her mother, Erin decided to move forward with her plans. Fearful the teacher might not accept it, she completed a second assignment as well.

The next day, Erin tried to hand in her assignment she had written about God, but the teacher rejected it, accepting her other project (about Michael Jackson) instead. Later, during a class discussion, the teacher told Erin to take the God assignment home because leaving it on school property might violate the **First Amendment**.

Standing Strong

Erin's mother, Erica, took the story public to bring attention to the **religious discrimination** happening at her daughter's school.

Sadly, the classroom discussions over Erin's assignment actually led to the young student being teased by her classmates. Recess discussions moved from mocking her belief in God to racial insults.

Liberty Institute immediately stepped in to help. Liberty Attorney Jeremy Dys had several conversations with the general counsel of Shelby County School on behalf of Erica and Erin, to investigate the situation and inform the district of students' true constitutional rights.

Fortunately, in this situation Shelby County Schools did the right thing. This week, Erin was able to turn in her assignment with her original subject—God—and received an A.

Erin's mother told WREG Memphis that she simply "wanted Erin's right to be able to express herself not to ever be taken away again."

"I just wanted every Christian to know that we have a right to be able to express ourselves," she told the news outlet. "We understand that they've taken **prayer** out of schools, but they cannot take God out of our children."