

Atheists Attack Tennessee's Day of Prayer as 'Inappropriate'

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee enraged atheists when he invited the entire state of Tennessee to join him for a day of prayer on Thursday, Oct. 10.

Lee shared a proclamation, declaring Thursday to be a "Day of Prayer, Humility and Fasting":

"The people of Tennessee acknowledge our rich blessings, our deep transgressions, and our complex challenges, and further acknowledge the need to give thanks to God Almighty, to turn from our transgressions and ask God's forgiveness, and to humble ourselves and seek God's wisdom and guidance."

On a video posted to Twitter, Lee shared why he and his wife, Maria, were determined to lead the state in a day of voluntary prayer:

"On that day, Maria and I will offer prayers for healing, prayers for forgiveness, prayers of thanksgiving and prayers of hope for our state," Gov. Lee said on Twitter. "... We know that prayer accomplishes much. Prayer strengthens our families and it strengthens our communities. It strengthens our relationship with our neighbors. It strengthens our relationship with God himself."

A number of churches responded to Lee's call to prayer, including Crieve Hall Church of Christ in Nashville, World Outreach Church in Murfreesboro and Grace Chapel in Williamson County, which is where Lee attends.

Cultural commentator Larry Tomczak says he participated in the event and reports that thousands of people humbled themselves

in prayer:

Tennessee is blessed to have a strong Christian governor in Bill Lee who issued a proclamation calling for a Day of Prayer and Fasting on Thursday. We are also blessed to have a strong Christian woman, Marsha Blackburn, who is our United States Senator.

Thousands of men women and young people gathered on Thursday night for a fantastic time of praise, worship and then passionate prayer, crying heavenward for God's mercy and intervention in our government in these turbulent times. We are called the "Volunteer State" and certainly we saw a multitude volunteer in this critical time.

With the level of hatred and hostility towards our president in America, coming together and believing 2 Chronicles 7:14 is certainly needed. Outspoken celebrities, biased media, secularists, atheists, and mean-spirited politicians in both parties necessitates our recognizing the spiritual forces intensifying their divisive work behind the scenes.

We pray other governors will follow our lead here in Tennessee and do as our governor and Abraham Lincoln did in the Civil War era in calling people in their sphere to ask God for help in this time of need.

But atheists decried the day of prayer as unconstitutional. Freedom From Religion Foundation Presidents Dan Barker and Annie Laurie wrote an op-ed in the *Knoxville News Sentinel*, in which they called Gov. Lee's actions "inappropriate," "unnecessary" and "a disservice to the Constitution—and his citizens."

And *USA Today's* David Plazas wrote that even though Gov. Lee's proclamation did not violate the law, it did create a "slippery slope":

“Lee has the right to worship as he pleases and his devotion to his faith was core to his campaign when he successfully ran for office in 2018. However, he must be mindful that the influence and power he holds as governor may make it appear that he is favoring one particular religious point of view.”

But Lee is not the first governing official to pronounce days of prayer, reports CBN News. U.S. presidents have declared days of prayer and thanksgiving at different times in U.S. history. That includes President George Washington when he declared Nov. 26, 1789, a day of thanksgiving and prayer, which eventually became the national holiday Thanksgiving.
{eoa}

For more on prayer, check out our new e-book Power Up Your Prayers, available [here](#) for only \$.