

Christian School Under Fire Due to Homework Asking for Pictures 'In the Bathtub'

Read time: 4 minutes 56 seconds

In today's world, discernment is a critical tool for parents raising their children. This includes when dealing with schools that claim to be Christian. A parent or guardian needs to be diligent and discerning in all matters concerning their child or children.

This was the case for Misty Dunham when she observed an unusual homework assignment her 8-year-old daughter was given by her teacher. The assignment was to take a picture while reading in the bathtub, and this did not sit well with Misty.

Dunham reached out to the teacher saying, "I emailed the teacher [to say] 'Hey, you may want to explain that. Send something out to the parents. Let them know what the intentions are.'" This just does not sound ok."

Mrs. Dunham was not satisfied with the teacher's response. "She did send out a message saying, 'you should be in pajamas, be in your uniform, have fun with it.'" But it didn't sit right," Dunham explained. "A bathtub is not appropriate for a child to take a picture."

Misty is correct, in this day and age a parent cannot be too careful when it comes to the safety of their children. Too many breeches of trust have given parents a cause for concern even in potentially innocent situations with teachers, sitters, troop leaders or any adult in a position of authority over their children.

Dunham decided to bring this to the attention of the school's

administration. The response came back much more defensive and combative than one would expect.

The school told her, "We have been sending this homework assignment for years, and you're the only one complaining about it. Just cover your child in pillows or pajamas," according to the Jacksonville Sheriff's police report.

This response should trigger a warning for any parent in this situation. The combativeness, rudeness and deflection within the response does not in any way demonstrate a Christian heart or attitude.

Parents have rights when it comes to their children, and asking for clarification of an assignment is well within those rights.

The president of Victory Christian Academy, Pastor Jesse Latta, defended the school's stance on the assignment by issuing a written response saying the assignment, "was taken out of an online teacher resource and has been used in many schools."

Neither of those arguments justifies the use of a potentially inappropriate assignment. "Other people use it" is an excuse a child would give an adult who has been caught red-handed doing something they know is wrong, and offers no logic-based reason for that particular assignment to be utilized in the classroom.

The next step the school took was to administratively withdraw Misty Dunham's daughter, McKenzie from the school. They first requested the parents voluntarily withdraw their daughter, and then removed her upon the parents' refusal to do so.

"She did something right by telling mom and dad that she wasn't comfortable with something, and now she's no longer in school," said McKenzie's father Christopher Dunham.

The school then appeared to cover its tracks, and shield itself from any potential problems in the future by removing the assignment altogether:

“While the assignment was completely innocent, out of an abundance of caution and for there to be no misunderstandings, our administration has removed this particular assignment for any future use,” claimed Latta. “We value our children, and their safety is our top priority. We will continue to serve the children and families in which the Lord has graciously allowed us to have a part in their lives.”

Pastor Latta refused to confirm or deny that the school had exacted revenge on the Dunham’s for bringing their complaint forward by having their daughter removed.

Blaze TV guest, Matthew Marsden, addressed this situation during a show with host Sara Gonzalez:

“Just because they say it’s a Christian academy doesn’t mean that it is,” Marsden said. “You don’t do this ... the internet is forever. You take a picture like that, it’s out there forever. This is just so weird ... it’s just a head-scratcher. Is this where we are in America? This is, it’s evil,” he claimed.

Mr. Marsden is correct, just because a person or place claim to be one thing, does not mean that they are in fact what they claim to be. Using discernment and the knowledge contained within the Word of God will equip and enable parents to understand situations that could potentially become dangerous for their children. {eoa}

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