

Maine Supreme Court Rules Mom Can't Teach Her Daughter the Bible or Take Her to Church

The Maine Supreme Court has unanimously upheld a custody order prohibiting a mother from taking her 13-year-old daughter to church or religious events. The court also ruled Emily Bickford can't allow her child to learn any "religious philosophy or the Bible in general."

Bickford hasn't been allowed to take her daughter to church or teach the Bible to her for nearly two years due to rulings by the courts in Maine.

The state's high court heard oral arguments last fall in the case of Bickford v. Bradeen – a battle pitting judicial authority against parental rights and the First Amendment.



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Liberty Counsel, a faith-based non-profit legal group, has been representing Bickford and is now asking the U.S. Supreme Court to take up the case.

"This opinion rejects the First Amendment right of a fit parent to raise her child consistent with her Christian faith," said Liberty Counsel Founder and Chairman Mat Staver. "This opinion goes against other state court decisions involving custody in the context of religious free exercise rights and ignores precedent from the U.S. Supreme Court. We will ask the High Court to take this case and overrule the decision."

Since December 2024, Bickford has been challenging a custody order that prohibits her from bringing her daughter, Ava, to

Calvary Chapel in Portland, Maine.

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