

‘We Don’t Do Prayer’: Mayor Silences Christian Mom Who Dared to Pray for Her City

In a powerful moment that shows the spiritual battle raging across America, a Southern California mother was silenced for praying in the name of Jesus during a heated Ventura City Council meeting.

The Mar. 18, meeting was convened to discuss a controversial policy proposal that would make Ventura a sanctuary city for illegal immigrants and transgender-affirming practices, including for minors.

As reported by The Christian Post, Tarin Swain, a mother of six and a marketing manager for Moms For America, approached the council with a broken heart over how her daughter had been “socially transitioned at her school” without her consent.

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“The school changed her name and gender in classes and told her it would be kept from me,” Swain said.

But it was her decision to abandon a prepared statement in favor of Spirit-led prayer that ignited the moment.

“Father God, I just come to You in Jesus’ name. I pray, Father, that You would tear down the strongholds in this place,” Swain prayed, before being interrupted by loud booing from the crowd and a sharp rebuke from Ventura Mayor Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios: “We don’t do prayer. Please finish your comments.”

Despite the hostility, Swain refused to be silenced, boldly finishing her prayer: “I do pray all this in the name of the

Jesus, the Son, the Father and the Holy Spirit. ... Jesus is the King of kings and He is the Lord of lords.”

This wasn’t a premeditated act of defiance. “I hadn’t planned to pray,” Swain explained. “But when I learned that I only had one minute to speak, I knew that my prepared comments were too long. In that moment, I asked God what He wanted me to do with my 60 seconds. I felt the Holy Spirit prompt me to use my time for prayer, and so that’s what I did.”

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Swain’s prayer—and the attempt to silence it—has since gone viral, sparking national conversation and prompting legal experts to weigh in.

“Any concern that the Establishment Clause is violated by prayer during public comment is misplaced,” said Erin Smith, associate counsel at First Liberty Institute. “Private citizens speak on their own behalf, not on behalf of the government.”

This moment in Ventura is not isolated. It is a snapshot of the growing spiritual warfare erupting in communities across the country. The battle isn’t just over policies—it’s over truth, family and the right to call on God publicly in times of cultural crisis.

Swain later reflected, “I had a man from the community come up to me afterward and express that in his years of attending hundreds of Ventura City Council meetings, he’s never seen someone stopped from praying. To me, it was a proof point for the power of prayer.”

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The city’s controversial Community Autonomy, Rights and

Equality policy has temporarily been pulled from consideration following the backlash but is expected to return to the table soon.

“As a Christian, I believe that we cannot stop the insanity of these policies without God and without people standing up to what is happening,” Swain said.

This moment wasn’t just political, it was prophetic. And as the culture continues to shift, the people of God must be ready, not just to speak, but to pray with boldness, no matter the cost.

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