

Former Atheist Initiates National Day of Repentance on Resurrection Sunday

Professor and Harvard graduate William Jeynes is organizing a National Day of Repentance for Easter, Sunday, April 1. He is contacting governors to announce the proclamation for their states and religious leaders to make the proclamation for their houses of worship and denominations.

He is hopeful that President Trump will make the declaration for the country. Dr. Jeynes is not calling for a common service to do this, but rather, he is simply asking that pastors and families set aside as much time in their services (online, livestream or whatever is permitted) and as they want to pray a Nehemiah 1-type prayer, asking for God to forgive this nation's sins.

"God is a God of love and we need to see the opportunity to say 'sorry to God' (and mean it)—i.e., repent—as a blessing," Jeynes says. "I was brought up as an atheist and lived and later worked in gang-filled areas of New York City and just outside the city. I had an extremely hard life in which our income was more often than not under the poverty line. Nevertheless, I remember when I was very young and prayer and Bible readings were still in the public school.

"The teacher would often lead us in classroom prayers during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Ironically, even though I was an atheist, that was the only time I could remember having a real sense of peace during my childhood. When I became a senior in high school, having gone through a dangerous and frightening childhood, I remembered that peace I had when I prayed with my classmates in the public school. It was the remembrance of that peace that caused me to call on the name of the Lord. The

God of love heard my prayer and saved my soul. It is that God of love who we call during the National Day of Repentance on Easter, April 12. We ask Him to turn away the virus and eliminate it from our shores and from around the world."

Dr. Jeynes, along with another colleague, were the ones who first wrote to Secretary DeVos, in early March 2017, asking that the Trump Administration update federal guidelines for prayer and religious liberties in the schools. In that request, Dr. Jeynes and his colleague wrote up the first draft of those guidelines. Trump signed the final draft on Jan. 16 of this year.

"We need God's love," Jeynes says. "We need to cry out to God to inspire us to act out of love. As a society, we have lost too much of our compassion toward the hurting and especially the unborn. God created humans with the need to rely on Him. Even if we have run away from God, He will come running to us."

Dr. Jeynes asks churches simply to email or phone him to let him know if you are participating. You can contact him at (714) 397-7763, or by email at whjharvard@. {eo}

Dr. William Jeynes is a professor at California State University in Long Beach and a senior fellow at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton.