

Will You Ignite a Righteous Revolution?

God is looking for believers who are willing to fight to restore the biblical foundations in our country. Are you ready to answer the call?

When I was a child, one of my favorite parts of the school day was when my teacher would open her big black Bible and read us a Scripture verse. After that, we would all fold our hands and bow our heads as she led us in a short prayer. We would pray for our country, teachers, school and generally, anything else that needed prayer. Nobody complained. It was as natural as breathing or standing up to salute the flag.

But these activities came to a screeching halt on June 25, 1962, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the *Engel v. Vitale* case that prayer should be taken out of public school. In one fell swoop millions of students and teachers were barred from praying in the classroom.

Strangely enough, the prayer that was banned—*“Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessing upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country”*—did not use the name “Jesus Christ.” Even more ludicrous, the day after the case was decided, students were back in their classrooms reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, which includes the words “one nation under God.”

In his book *America: To Pray or Not to Pray* (Wall Builders Publishing), author David Barton charts the decline of this nation, hypothesizing that it is the result of 60 million students’ discontinuing their prayers for their parents, teachers and country. He makes a good case for his theory. The worst problems we had when the simple 22-word prayer was banned were students chewing gum or throwing spit wads. In the

almost 40 years since our children ceased their daily intercession, the situation in our schools has gone from gum to guns!

The question is: What are we going to do about it?

For years I had been saying from pulpits across this nation: "I was just a child when *Engel v. Vitale* was passed. If the U.S. Supreme Court ever makes a decision like that again affecting school prayer, I will not be silent!"

On June 19, 2000, my opportunity to speak out came—in response to a 6-3 decision handed down by the high court in the case of *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe*. The justices ruled that a school's policy of allowing students to give either an invocation or a message before a football game violates the First Amendment. Once again our Supreme Court had ruled against prayer.

This time, I knew I had to voice my objections.

SPEAKING OUT

In the August/September 2000 issue of our organization's newsletter, *GI News*, Colby May, formerly of the American Center for Law and Justice, wrote that under the Santa Fe decision any affirmative steps taken by a school district to create a vehicle for prayer to be delivered at any school assembly violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

"In condemning the school district for allowing its 'message or invocation policy,'" May says, "the Court rejected out of hand any other explanation for the policy—such as solemnizing the game, or building student responsibility—and raged that 'this policy is about prayer.'

"While acknowledging the 'crucial difference between government speech endorsing religion, which the Establishment Clause forbids, and private speech endorsing religion, which

the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses protect,' the Court simply ruled that the pre-game student messages could not be regarded as 'private speech.'"

In the same issue of *GI News*, David Barton wrote that this decision is just one more example of the continuing hostility the high court has toward any religious expression. "I think you'll find that the six Justices (who voted against school prayer) are offended personally by religion. They don't want to see it, or express it, or even consider it part of free speech. Anything else, you can do in the name of free speech."

Barton points out that, ironically, students may use the words "God" and "Jesus Christ" during athletic events or in graduation speeches as long as they are cursing. "But if they use them in a respectful manner, the identical words become unconstitutional," he says.

May also recounts a long list of wrongs committed against religious students in public schools, including such incidents as:

- Threatening to pepperspray students who had gathered quietly to pray before school in observation of the National Day of Student Prayer
- Arresting and handcuffing students who had participated in "See You at the Pole" events
- Denying students the right to read their Bibles while on public school buses
- Denying students the right to read their Bibles during breaks, lunches, study halls and independent reading periods
- Refusing to recognize the rights of students to organize and conduct Bible clubs and prayer groups, even though required to do so by the Federal Equal Access Act.

We know that none of this was the original intent of the founders of our nation! The Declaration of Independence clearly states we are given rights that the laws of nature and nature's God, the Creator, have given us.

This document ends with an appeal by the signers, our founding fathers, to the Supreme Judge of the world—God. But since it was penned something has gone terribly wrong in this nation, and it's time for a "righteous" revolution!

If we are ever going to see the current situation change, we will have to pray, work and fight. We will have to teach our children to do what the early Christians did when they were commanded by authorities not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus (see Acts 4:18)—keep speaking and teaching! Peter and John told the leaders of their day: "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (vv. 19-20).

The bottom line is that we need to obey God and not man. This is the battle cry for our revolution. I firmly believe God is calling women to stand up and fight for prayer to be put back in school. We need to do what other women have done historically in this nation and fight for what is biblically mandated!

In the closing hours of the 1800s, America witnessed an astounding move of God among Christian women. The Women's Christian Temperance Union was formed and, as far as I know, was the first large-scale women's organization to spread worldwide. Out of the midst of this movement rose a cry for women in the U.S. to promote not only temperance, but also the right to vote—women's suffrage.

Frances Willard became a key figure in women's suffrage. Hers was a divinely ordained mission. *Women of Destiny* (Regal Books) describes the call in Willard's own words: "While alone on my knees one Sabbath, in the capitol of Crusade state, as I lifted my heart to God, crying, 'What wouldst Thou have me to do?' there was born in upon my mind, as I believe from loftier regions, this declaration, 'You are to speak for women's ballot as a weapon for protection for her home.'"

By 1920 American women had gained the right to vote. Congress passed the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and the necessary state ratifications followed. The Amendment stated, "The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

A statue of Frances Willard stands today in the U.S. Capitol building with the inscription, "For God and Country." She was definitely a woman before her time and was once even asked to preach with the great evangelist D.L. Moody. Her life is a testimony to us, decades later, of a revolutionary who fought for the cause of Christ.

AWAKE, DEBORAH!

First Samuel 17:29 is a wonderful Scripture verse that never fails to stir my heart: "And David said, 'What have I done now? Is there not a cause?'" The young, brave David couldn't understand why no one would fight Goliath. We could say that David fought the giant based on a mandate from God—to help free Israel. David was a revolutionary who freed his nation from the tyranny of the giant.

God is looking for revolutionaries like David and like Frances Willard today. He wants both "fathers" and "mothers" of the revolution who will fight for righteousness.

Deborah was such a revolutionary. When God called her to lead Israel, it was in a time of extreme distress. A passage in Judges 5 paints a bleak picture of her nation: "The highways were deserted, and the travelers walked along the byways" (v. 6, NKJV). In other words, the main thoroughfares were too dangerous for travel, so people had to use the back roads.

The passage goes on to say that village life in Israel ceased (see v. 7). The enemy had virtually destroyed their society. In addition, the people "chose new gods; then there was war in the gates; not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand

in Israel" (v. 8). They had become idolaters and didn't own any weapons to battle the enemy.

In the midst of this hopeless situation, God raised up a woman, someone who—as both a prophetess and a revolutionary—we can look to as a model for women who will fight today for the cause of righteousness. Deborah had several qualities that made her effective in her position. She:

- Knew how to hear from God
- Loved her nation
- Recognized the state of her nation
- Was unafraid to go into battle, even at the possible cost of her life
- Possessed and displayed great courage against impossible odds
- Was a team player with Barak
- Was a worshipper.

She also was a visionary who looked beyond the current political and physical situation to the will of God for her nation. God is looking for women today who will look at the United States of America, acknowledge the state of the nation and work to bring about His will for our country.

Clearly, we are losing our liberties as Christians, and if we don't fight, it isn't outlandish to predict that there may come a day when it is illegal to witness in the schools of this nation or speak the name of Jesus Christ. We must be like Deborah, who stirred herself up in the anointing and prepared for battle with the cry of "Awake, awake, Deborah!" (Judg. 5:12).

Alice Patterson of the Pray Texas organization sees the Supreme Court ruling on prayer as a magnificent opportunity for us to be modern-day Deborahs. Patterson is calling for a national prayer movement called "See You at the Game," which encourages students and parents to stand and pray aloud the Lord's Prayer before high school sporting events.

Here at Generals of Intercession we have launched a nationwide youth prayer movement called "The Cause." We intend to establish prayer, evangelism, and the miraculous on every high school, college and university campus in America.

What can you do to fight for a righteous revolution? Of course, pray. Pray that this nation will put prayer as well as Bible reading back in school. Some Christians in America are so pluralistic in their thinking that they believe this would be unjust. But remember, historically, prayer and Bible reading were a normal part of the daily school routine.

All things are possible to those who believe. We need to establish America as one nation under God—again!

Besides praying, there are other things you can do to help turn the tide in our nation. You can write the U.S. Supreme Court justices. First, thank them for all the hard work they are doing for this nation. Then in your own words, write that you would like them to consider the Constitution in light of the original intent of the founders. Let the Holy Spirit lead you in the wording, and be careful not to be critical.

In like manner, you can write members of Congress and encourage them to enact legislation in favor of prayer in school. Another important thing is to be like Deborah and stay informed. Keep abreast of such organizations as the American Center for Law and Justice, which fights hard for Christian issues such as the abolition of abortion.

Don't be afraid to be a voice for righteousness in your child's school and in local city government. If you see something that goes against God's Word, don't be afraid to address it. This is how society is changed.

If we all do our part, I have no doubt that my dream to see America's schoolchildren start their day with prayer will be fulfilled. I can almost hear their voices now: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your Name ..."

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