

Spirit-Filled Pastor: One Major Flaw in the House Impeachment Proceedings

I think I may have found the major problem in the recent impeachment inquiry proceedings: None of the witnesses in the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee have affirmed their truthfulness by their accountability to God!

None have affirmed, with their right hand raised and the other on a Bible (or religious symbol of their choice), that they call on Almighty God (or even a "Higher Power") to hold them personally and particularly accountable—in this life and the life to come—for what they are about to testify.

Author and educator Bill Federer is the host of *American Minute*, a radio short-feature we enjoyed and used on our network. He has written extensively about the purpose of an oath ("...so help me God") in this "...one nation under God."

For over 200 years, witnesses in proceedings in our courts and Congress affirmed their honesty and personal submission to a Sovereign God. However, this House Judiciary Subcommittee and the Democratic Chairman Jerry Nadler, along with his liberal, majority members, took God out of the Oath of Witnesses. They abruptly and arbitrarily changed it all earlier this year by their arrogant actions—without any vote or even consultation with the minority members.

In Federer's recent blog, he reports how the Democratic-dominated House Judiciary Subcommittee, on Feb. 28, 2019, broke with centuries of American congressional practice and precedent. He reports that:

Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN) was swearing in witnesses.

Rep. Mike Johnson (R-La.) made a point of parliamentary inquiry: "I think we left out 'so help me God.'"

Cohen replied: "We did."

Johnson asked, "Can we have the witnesses do it again for the record?"

Cohen responded: "No," then added: "If they want to do it, but some of them don't want to do it, and I don't think it's necessary, and I don't like to assert my will over other people."

Johnson responded: "Well it goes back to our founding history, it's been a part of our tradition for more than two centuries and I don't know that we should abandon it now."

Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) interrupted: "If any witness objects he should not be asked to identify himself. We do not have religious tests for office or for anything else ... and we should let it go with that."

Cohen then moved on.

That was it.

Over 200 years of precedent of witnesses ending their oath with the phrase "so help me God" was gone.

The purpose of an oath is to call a Higher Power to hold you accountable to perform what you promised and the truth of what you are about to testify.

Federer clarifies that "if there is no God, there is no law, no future account; the government then is the ordinance of man only, and we cannot be subject for conscience sake."

He further accentuates the American tradition for all official oaths to end with "So help me God."

—The military's oath of enlistment ended with "So help me

God.”

–The commissioned military officers’ oath ended with “So help me God.”

–President’s oath of office ended with “So help me God.”

–Congressmen and senators’ oath of office ended with “So help me God.”

–Witnesses in court swore to tell the truth, “So help me God.”

–Even an oath proposed by Lincoln for individuals in the “rebellion” wanting to be or restored as U.S. citizens says they were to express their allegiance to the United States, ending with “So help me God.”

The acknowledgment of God and spoken oaths of obedience to His laws and accountability to His commandments, like “Thou shalt not bear false witness,” are only effective if the public at large maintains their respect for and fear of God.

Our second American president, John Adams, said:

“Our Constitution was made only for moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

As modern church attendance falls (particularly in “mainline churches”) moral principles and observed obligations are weakened and the effectiveness of oaths of moral truthfulness is open to debate—even in our modern Congress.

Is it any wonder that patriotism is weakened as the Pledge of Allegiance and inspirational lyrics of Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America” are also under scrutiny—mainly because of their reference to God?

President Ronald Reagan, twice in 1984, made quotable comments about God and our nation:

“If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under.”

Later that same year, “The Great Communicator” wisely said:

“Without God, there is no virtue because there is no prompting of the conscience.”

But we, brothers and sisters, have God, living by His Spirit in us, and He has destined us to serve Him in this “land of the free and the home of the brave.” Let our lives be so lived to do all we can to influence for good and overcome evil—in these last days!

May all the readers say: “Amen!” and “So help me God!” {eoa}

*Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois, and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015); and served for the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church’s not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*