

BELIEVER'S FORUM

Thank You Madalyn Murray O'Hair

by Jamie Buckingham

The issue of prayer in public schools is still active — and emotional. Recently, Sen. Jesse Helms, running for

re-election in N.C., sponsored another bill trying to get prayer re-instated. The Senate, however, rather than face the issue in an election year, aborted the entire bill.

So the fight continues. Now, though, it is basically political, rather than spiritual. Politicians, most of whom do not pray themselves, seek the votes of those who do by keeping the issue alive.

The fact is, there is NO RULE which bans prayer from public schools. In 1962 the Supreme Court handed down a landmark case ruling that a government written prayer, requiring children to recite it, is unconstitutional.

Then in 1963 Madalyn O'Hair was party to an auxiliary case when the court ruled that governmentally-required religious devotions also violated the Constitution.

Church people got frantic. But they did not stop to realize that the government had protected them from all kinds of false religions. The high court had correctly interpreted the First Amendment, banning only prayers prescribed by state authorities — and state-sponsored teachings.

In writing the majority opinion for the 1962 case, Justice Hugo Black stated: "Students have the right to practice prayer and read the Bible. But they do not have the right to the aid of the state in that exercise."

It was one of the court's finest decisions. Just a year ago a federal judge in New Jersey used that ruling to deny supporters of TM from teaching their doctrine in the public schools.

Christian kids and teachers need to see the public school as a mission field — not a church. And because we live in a free country they are free to witness as much as they like. Compulsory religion should be banned. Let it be a matter of the heart — and let the teaching come from the homes, churches, or in small Bible clubs at school. But not directed by the state.

Mrs. O'Hair did us all a favor. The very God she says does not exist is still working all things for His good.

Standing on God's Promises

by George Clouse

My wife, Mary Jo, and I were saved in a Baptist church in 1971. We were baptized in water a few weeks later along with our two teenage children.

STAYSKAL



"I WONDER IF HE GOT THAT TOPIC FROM THE BIBLE OR THE LATEST RISE IN FOOD PRICES?"

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