Principles In Prayer Essay, Research Paper

Principles in Prayer

There is a growing trend in America today that something drastically needs to be changed about our school system. The public is scared to send their children to a place where they could potentially be shot, stabbed, beaten, or be subjected to drugs on any given day. The morals of this country’s youth are being shaped by every action, by every minute they live in this negative environment. Ever since the Supreme Court’s ruling to have prayer banished from public schools the morals of this country have been going downhill. 7 Of all the Court rulings of this century none has sparked more action in Congress than Engel vs. Vitale (Alley, 107). The court’s ruling not only altered their present but also has greatly affected our county’s future.

The government has taken this issue to the highest court only to have its decision questioned time and time again. A problem needs to be addressed to put prayer back into schools. There are so many different groups that want to have a compromise made over this issue that individual congressmen, trying to respond to this atomized latent group, ended up offering 144 different prayer resolutions and 150 different amendments to the eventual school prayer amendment! (Alley, 128) When there is this much of a public outcry for the resolution of an issue it is amazing that there has not been much change from the original ruling made in 1962 to the present.

The exclusion of prayer from our public schools is not the only reason why people have lost the moral footing that this country was based on. There is no doubt that the people of this nation have a heritage rooted in religion. Studies show that a vast majority of Americans claim to have faith in God. One recent study found that 82% of Americans profess to believe in an afterlife that includes both heaven and hell (Patterson, 204). By taking daily prayer out of the school the school system and subjecting those who wish to do it to many guidelines and red tape not only infringes on their rights but also on there way of life. By ruling that the one person out of five that does not believe in God has rights over the rest of the majority is breaking the basic principles that make up the base of the Constitution. In our nation the majority rules mentality has been the basis since the final signature of our founding fathers.

When prayer is taken away, that daily reminder of God is also removed. If the morals that were used to build this country are removed from its citizens, then what is left? The prayer instills the feeling of a greater being, no matter what you believe in. That belief instills respect in our youth for not only themselves, but also their parents, teachers, and peers that is sorely missing from today’s society. That lack of respect leads to the rampant teen pregnancy, drug use, gang shootings, and later problems in the lives of those youth who do not have that positive influence at home.

The immorality that plagues this nation goes back to that decision made in 1962. When prayer was taken out of school in stopped creating the positive influence on the children of that generation. The effects of that disconnection are appearing in the children and society of today. The atmosphere that was created by daily prayer for our grandparent’s generation is not apparent in this and was stopped during our parent’s formative years. The morals and ethics that go along with prayer and religion were not passed down to the fledgling generation, cutting them loose without the compassion and respect needed to change a cold world created by the decision of those who did not wish to step on anyone’s toes or infringe on the minority’s rights. All this at the cost of the majority’s favor and the welfare of our children’ future.

The solution to restore the humanity and morality to our nation begins with the restoration of such a basic institution back into our schools. The one thing that makes our nation so great is the freedom to worship whatever god you desire, be it Jesus Christ, Ala, or money. The free choice to do what you want is a privilege most other countries do not give to its citizens. But that freedom is infringed upon when our children cannot pray openly in school without being chastised and told they are not allowed to do it. Prayer should not be a mandatory obligation every student has to take part in, but also should not be completely banished from the premise. Students and teachers should be allowed to lead prayer of their own free choice, not being subjected to the rules and regulations that state when and where they are allowed to pray. They backbone of this county was ripped out nearly forty years ago and the affects of that brutality are starting to decay the strength of this country. There is something greatly wrong when the role model for the entire country, the President of the United States, is practicing immorality in the Oval Office. A solution needs to be found, and found quickly.

If the issue were not important it would have died out years ago. Although everyone puts it on the back burner (it will never lead a platform), it is something that people want to see addressed. The next generation of leaders will come from this generation, one that has degraded morally over the last twenty years. When it is our turn to fill in the new pages of the history books, will it be with horrible statistics showing the increase of welfare dependency, divorce, abortion, and crime. Or will it show that society finally decided it wanted something better, it wanted to change the face of this world for the sake of the future. When we finally decide to stand up for what we know is right, to truly show we have the strength of conviction to support our faith, when we can put Church and State back into the same institution; that is when the difference will come. That is when this country will finally start to climb the hill toward restoring this country’s pride, it compassion, and it hope for the future. Until then we can only pray. But then that is where the whole problem starts, isn’t it?

1. Robert S. Alley, School Prayer: The Court, the Congress, and the First Amendment, (NY: Prometheus Books, 1994)

2. James Patterson, The Day Americans Told the Truth, (NY: Prentice Hall, 1991)