

Holiness is a reflection of God, Not Government Control of Education

Lest it be thought that a few speak for the many, we need to make it clear that we respect the right and even duty of all clergy to speak to issues such as the right of parents to educate their children in the dictates of their faith and/or conscience. We also wish to make it clear there are many of us in pulpits who believe that parents of limited income should not be trapped into sending their children to government schools that may be failing them. It is tragic that some of the same voices demanding we keep government schools separated from God are calling government funding “holy”. Remember, the children and the money first belong to the parents.

For example, *“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.” (1 Peter 1:14-16)* That is a charge to those who claim the name of Jesus Christ, NOT to a government system that has removed Him from it.

One of the essential questions that must be raised in the escalating debate in Texas over whether parents should have the freedom to place their child in a school environment outside the “public” school system and have some of the funding follow is this – Who, before God, has the primary responsibility for the education of a child? No reasonable person who has even a remote grasp of the historic values this nation was founded upon let alone the Holy Scriptures would say anything other than the obvious – that child’s parents.

When we refer to “public schools”, we should be saying “government schools” because the schools in question are a function of local, state and federal government. The second is whether the tenets of any of the major religions, the U.S. and Texas Constitutions and historical precedent direct that government should control, let alone have a monopoly over the education of children’s minds, hearts and souls?

One hundred and fifty years into government education, there are few people who believe we should dismantle or damage the “public/state” system (any more than it has harmed itself). In truth, monopoly always produces inefficiency, waste and costliness. A simple fact of freedom is that families who cannot afford to pay twice should not be trapped into schools they don’t believe are best for their child(ren).

Children are a “gift from the Lord” according to Psalm 127:3 and we believe that empowering parents through universal Education Savings Accounts while protecting their right to direct their child’s education is a historic principle that must be restored in Texas now. On behalf of many peers in this region who stand as we do, we are:

The Undersigned Clergy:

Pastor Rudy Bond, Clarks Chapel (Emory)

Pastor Stanley Cofer, Empowerment Ministries (Tyler)

Pastor Alan Coleman, Gates Community Church Int’l (Athens)

Pastor Jim Edwards, First Assembly of God (Brownsboro)

Pastor Mike Hooper, Church on the Lake (Livingston)

Pastor Ray Wilson, Light of the World Church (Marshall)

P.S. We are also signers of the [Texas Pastors’ Declaration for Empowering Parents in Education](#) along with hundreds of pastors around Texas.