



A CHRISTIAN CIVIL PRAYER VICTORY!

Let me tell you about a stunning victory for religious liberty in a very important court. This is one to thank the Lord for!

Every year like clockwork another class of seniors at Medina Valley High School near San Antonio gathers in the school's football stadium, to celebrate their graduation ceremony. And they like to include prayer in the ceremony.

This year, someone objected to those prayers, and filed a lawsuit in federal court. And just a few days before graduation, a federal judge not only ordered that there be no official invocation or benediction, but that the school was to ensure that no one prayed or attempted to thank God or even utter an "amen." The judge threatened to jail any school officials who didn't follow his order to the letter.

Enter Angela Hildenbrand, Medina Valley's valedictorian, who was scheduled to give an address at the ceremony. She was not part of any school-sponsored prayer. She simply wanted, on her own, to pray a simple prayer of thanks to God as part of her valedictory address. But the federal judge had suddenly dashed her hopes in his rush to scrub the occasion of all prayer. What could one 18-year old possibly hope to do in the face of a federal court order?

Angela enlisted the aid of our good friends at the Liberty Institute, who filed an emergency appeal on her behalf with the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals (which is one step below the U.S. Supreme Court). Two days later the appeals court said the first judge got it wrong. And just in time. The graduation ceremony was held the very next day, on Saturday June 4--and Angela was able to give her entire address, including a prayer, without being censored.

We're thankful that one individual, armed with faith in God, can still stand against the odds and achieve a great victory for freedom of religion. I thought you'd like to know.

For faith and family, Tom Minnery, Focus on the Family

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