

GOD'S NOT DEAD 2

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you..." 1 Peter 3:15



Legal Harassment

This new film *God's Not Dead 2*, confronts the growing intolerance against Christianity in state run educational institutions in the USA. Based on numerous instances of legal harassment of school teachers, this film dramatizes the issues at stake. The school administration makes clear to a coach:

"No prayers, not in the locker room, not on the field, not in the parking lot, no prayer, anywhere, anytime."

Counselling a Grieving Student

A high school History teacher is concerned for one of her students, Brooke, who is grieving over the loss of her brother who died in a traffic accident. While Brooke's parents keep telling her to "move on", Brooke longs for just a few more minutes with her deceased brother to resolve issues. Her teacher, Grace Wesley, perceives that Brooke is going through a hard time and seeks to help her. At a local coffee shop, Brooke asks her teacher, how she manages to keep it all together and to remain so positive. Grace replies with one word: "Jesus".

Break the Cycle of Hate - Love Your Enemies

Shortly after that, while Grace is speaking about resolving political conflicts through rejecting violence and seeking peaceful resolution to conflicts, Brooke asks her teacher if this is not what Jesus meant when He told His followers to love their enemies and bless those who persecute you. Grace agrees and quotes the passage of Scripture, where Jesus said that we are to love our enemies and bless those who persecute us.

Courage to Stand

In the classroom, after Grace quotes what Jesus had said, concerning loving your enemies and doing to others what you want them do to you, a student comments, *"But it didn't work, Jesus got killed." "I wouldn't do it,"*

declared others. Grace responds:

"Not many do, not many have the courage to stand up for what they believe."

Threats

Even before the lesson is over, students in the class are texting their parents. The school administration overreacts with a Disciplinary Hearing where they demand that Grace apologise and pledge to never mention the Name of Jesus again. The school places Grace under disciplinary review, suspension without pay and threatens to have her Teaching Certificate revoked unless she backs down and promises to never again mention the Name or words of Jesus. When Grace refuses to do that, the school board brings in the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to represent Brooke's parents in bringing Grace Wesley to trial.

Taking a Stand

Grace maintains that she gave an honest answer to a legitimate question in a History class. She has done nothing wrong and sees no reason to apologise. More importantly, she cannot, in good conscience, undertake to never reference her Faith. As Grace is assigned a secular lawyer by the Teachers Union, she explains to him why she cannot give in to their unreasonable pressure. *"I would rather stand with God and be judged with the world, than stand with the world and be judged by God!"*

Targeted for Destruction

Her lawyer advises her that they are out to destroy her: along with the revocation of her Teaching Certificate, they are wanting her to carry all the lawyers costs and punitive damages to be awarded to the parents of the teenager whose question she answered.

A Matter of Principle

When challenged as to why he is taking the case, the lawyer responds: *"People who haven't done anything wrong shouldn't be punished."*

A Malicious Agenda

The ACLU lawyer, Kane, is a committed atheist and declares that he wants to make Grace a test case and an example to totally remove the Name of Jesus from the public square. *"I hate everything she stands for and what people like her are doing to this country!"*

Opportunism and Greed

The parents of Brooke are encouraged by the ACLU to push the case as it will provide their

daughter with the opportunity of obtaining a scholarship to a prestigious Ivy League university, like Stanford, and financial opportunities by the expensive settlement that will result in their favour.

Faith on Trial

The ACLU tries to make the case that it is not Christianity or religion that is on trial, but just Miss Wesley. She favourably compared Jesus with Ghandi and quoted from the Scripture, from the very Words of Jesus, in a classroom. *"That is not teaching. That is preaching."* Kane asserts:

"Our

society will crumble if religious fanatics like Miss Wesley are allowed to quote Scripture in the classroom. The future of our Republic depends on convicting her of violating local, state and federal laws."

Freedom at Risk

The defence lawyer argues that his client just answered a question. Facts are facts, whether they are recorded in the Bible or elsewhere. A basic human right is to believe. The ACLU has a tortured distortion of the law. The separation of church and state is nowhere to be found in the Constitution. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights prohibit the state establishing a religion, but guarantees the free exercise of religion.

Violated

A Teachers Union representative claims that everyone knows that Grace Wesley is a Christian and she talks to everyone about her Faith. The prosecution claims that what Miss Wesley did was disrespectful and illegal - proselytising innocent and impressionable students, violating them with her Faith! The fact that Grace Wesley had invited the principal to a church service is regarded with great seriousness.

Tolerance and Diversity?

The defence attorney points out that a school memo sent out at the beginning of the year emphasised the importance of diversity and tolerance and asked whether that did not translate to diversity to every religion except Christianity and tolerance for every opinion, except that of Christians?

Expert Witnesses

The defence lawyer brings in expert witnesses, real life, former atheists, Lee Strobel, the author of *The Case for Christ* and J. Warner Wallace, author of *Cold Case Christianity*. Warner Wallace as a police homicide investigator, utilised the same forensic witness examination that he would use in any murder case and applied it to the death of Jesus at the hands of the Romans. Both testify that their skeptical enquiries into the facts confirmed the historicity, not only of the life and death of the Lord Jesus, but also of His Resurrection from the dead.

Facts are Stubborn Things

Jesus Christ is an historic figure better attested to than any other historic figure of antiquity. The fact that our calendars are dated from the birth of Jesus with all of time being divided into Before Christ (B.C) and In the Year of our Lord (A.D.), testifies to the historicity of Jesus. How can anyone teach history and ignore the most historically influential character of all time?

Manipulated

However, as the case seems to be moving in the favour of Grace, the young 16-year-old, on whose behalf the case is being driven, bursts into the courtroom and demands to be able to give her testimony in support of her teacher. The ACLU lawyer uses this as an opportunity to have Brooke acknowledge the huge impact which her teacher has had on her life and that, in fact, Grace was *proselytising*, as they put it. When Brooke counters that it was finding her brother's Bible and seeing all his margin notes and prayers that was decisive in bringing her to conversion, the ACLU lawyer responds by pointing out, that by her own testimony, she had not even been thinking about God until her teacher brought up the subject.

Severe Jeopardy

When Pastor Dave suffers a ruptured appendix and has to be excused from the Jury, it seems that Grace has lost the only sympathetic individual on the Jury. The jeopardy is severe and the stakes are high as it is not only Grace's career that is at risk, but that this could become a test case that would lead to more open persecution of Christians in education.

Under Pressure

Various sub plots strengthen the main thrust of the film. A Chinese student who comes to faith in Christ is rejected by his father who seems to be a senior in Red China. The Chinese student comes to Christ and is called to train for the ministry and return to minister to his people in communist China. When Pastor Dave feels obligated to refuse a Subpoena for his sermons, this leads to his arrest. A journalist battling with her new found faith weighs in on the media side of this controversy.

Why is God Silent?

When the pressures become overwhelming, Grace asks her grandfather: *"Why is God so quiet?"*
He replies, *"The teacher is always quiet during the test."*

Faith and Freedom Under Fire

Grace testifies that she was converted when she saw the question: *"But who do you say that I am?"*
She answers: *"You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!"*
Christians are called to risk everything for Christ.

A World War of Worldviews

God's Not Dead 2 is a powerful, riveting and timely focus on the world war of worldviews raging in our educational institutions. It tackles head on the issues of religious freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of opinion, freedom of association, and freedom of conscience, all of which are under severe pressure and attack at this time. It calls on believers to always be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within us, to always acknowledge Christ and He will make our paths straight. It is a call to Biblical boldness and Christian courage.

Atheism's War Against God Destroys All Meaning and Hope

Grace's grandfather makes the comment: *"atheism does not take away the pain - it just takes away the hope!"*

Highly Recommended

The film is well worth seeing and well worth recommending to your friends and family members to enjoy.

The Field is Wide Open

We should also praise God for the tremendous religious freedoms which we enjoy in much of Africa, and the openness of the schools in South Africa to the Gospel. Praise God that we are not facing such intense hostility to Christianity in our schools - yet. Although there is tremendous hostility building up on university campuses towards the Christian faith, our Bill of Rights is still clearly on our side in South Africa in affirming our religious freedom and freedom of conscience. We need to utilise these freedoms and the wide open doors to minister in our schools while the doors are still open.

Answering Skeptics

For those who want evidences and answers for the Skeptics, obtain the [Answering Skeptics](#) book and the accompanying

[Answering Skeptics Audio MP3 Boxset](#)

, which provide battle-tested answers to the toughest questions atheists and agnostics can throw against us, including:

What About Hypocrites in the Church?, How Could A Good God Allow Evil?, Why Does God Not Stop All the Suffering?, How Do We Know That There is a God?, Isn't Religion Just a Crutch for the Weak?, What About the Inquisition?, What Proof Do We Have That the Bible is the Word of God?, What Evidence is There for the Resurrection?

, and much more. (Available from: Christian Liberty Books, PO Box 358, Howard Place 7450, Cape Town, South Africa, Tel: 021-689-7478, Fax: 086-551-7490, Email:

admin@christianlibertybooks.co.za

and Website:

www.christianlibertybooks.co.za

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Faith on Trial

We also have designed a tract, ***Faith on Trial***, on The Illegal Trial of Christ and the Verdict of History, which you can use to initiate conversations, invite people to view the film, or to give to people attending this film as a follow-up.

Atheist Test

[Living Waters Africa](#) also has an excellent [Atheist Test](#) Gospel booklet.

The Failure of Atheism

You can also view [The Failure of Atheism and the Triumph of Faith in Russia](#) on the www.christianaction.org.za website.

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