



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on September 23, 2016

## Satan Club for Elementary Students in Washington State?

When Alexis de Tocqueville visited America in the 1830s, he remarked, “The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and liberty so intimately in their minds that it is impossible to conceive the one without the other.”

Yet, an “After School Satan Club” will soon be established by the Satanic Temple of Seattle, if the Centennial Elementary School takes the advice of its attorney in the Mount Vernon School District.



Duncan Fobes, of the Seattle-based law firm of Patterson, Buchanan, Fobes and Leitch, said, “I think that if the school district denied that application, you would face costly litigation that would be distracting from your mission. And it would ultimately be unsuccessful.”

Now, it is not known if Fobes considers Christianity and liberty intertwined, but it is certainly a sad commentary on modern America that most Americans no longer see the connection between the two. One parent even said that she was unconcerned about the Satan Club at Centennial, saying, “It feels like we’re all reacting with fear. I’m not afraid of what this church [the Satanic Temple] can do, because I have a relationship with my children.”

Fobes explained why he believes the school district should simply throw in the towel. “We believe that it’s clear that, because the district has a policy and procedure that encourages the use of community groups to use your facilities, because you do that, you must open it to this group.” But, he added, “You don’t have to sponsor the group, you don’t have to help the group.”

The Satanic Temple apparently selected nine districts throughout the country to launch its Satan Club, apparently because these districts host a Good News Bible Club, run by the Child Evangelism Fellowship. In 2001, the U.S. Supreme Court held, in the case, *Good News Bible Club v. Milford Central School District*, that if a school allows any organization to use school property, the property then must be opened to all organizations wishing to use it, whether religious or secular.

Centennial Principal Erwin Stroosma explained, “We feel like we’re pawns in a game — someone else is manipulating us.” Stroosma said that Centennial did not “invite them” to the school, but rather the Satanist group put their name on a website of schools targeted.

The temple applied to rent space at the school for about an hour after school one day a month during the school year.

At a public meeting to discuss the club coming to the school, Moises Pacheco, whose grandchildren attend Madison Elementary, said, “They say they’re not going to teach anything bad, but we don’t know.” A Satanist group teach anything bad? What a shock.

While the group they want to create at the grade school is called the After School Satan Club, and the group itself calls itself the Satanic Temple, they claim that they actually worship no deity at all. They have previously said that it uses Satan “as a metaphor for fighting religious tyranny and oppression.”



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This provides a clue to their real goal. One of the arguments often used to keep the Gideons organization from coming onto public school grounds to hand out New Testaments to the little school children is “if you let the Gideons in, you have to let the Satanists in.” Because of that reasoning, many school districts opt to not let any outside groups in at all. And so when groups like the Satanic Temple announce their intention to place their own organization’s “after school club” in elementary schools, many will simply throw up their hands and kick the Christian club out.

In Oklahoma, after a 10 Commandments monument, built with private money, was placed on the grounds of the Oklahoma Capitol, another group expressed a desire to place a statue on the grounds honoring Satan, arguing for equal time. After all, both are “religious” symbols.

Opponents of the 10 Commandments monument used a provision of the Oklahoma State Constitution to file a challenge, which the Oklahoma Supreme Court eventually used to order the monument’s removal. They argued that it was an “establishment” of religion.

This, of course, is ludicrous. At a place where the principal activity is the making of laws, a monument of some basic laws does not establish a religion, any more than the quotation of Cicero (“the ends of justice are that no man shall suffer wrong”) in the old state Supreme Court room established the law of the Roman republic.

The reason many of these attacks upon the Christian faith, such as the one coming from the Satanic Temple, are successful is that school districts simply do not want to expend the money fighting the group in court. Just the threat of a lawsuit is enough to cause most school districts to buckle. Mount Vernon’s lawyer, Duncan Fobes, said as much, telling the district, “you would face costly litigation.”

And this sums up the purpose of such groups as Satanic Temple. They don’t want Satan in the schools, so much as they want God out.

This, of course, is an attack on the foundations of the country. As de Tocqueville said, and as the Declaration of Independence states so clearly (“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”) without an established belief that our fundamental rights come from God, what then becomes the philosophical basis for human liberty?

The expression “separation of church and state” did not appear in the First Amendment, and was not even used by the Supreme Court until 1947, quoting Thomas Jefferson, who used the expression in a letter sent during his presidency to the Danbury Baptist Association. Jefferson wanted to assure the Baptists that the federal government would not interfere with their religious practices because the First Amendment had erected a “wall of separation between church and state.”

To illustrate the sheer silliness of modern arguments that this justifies keeping God off campuses because the use of public facilities would violate “the separation of church and state,” after Jefferson wrote his now-famous letter, he attended church services — in the U.S. Capitol.



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