THE AUSTRALIAN

'Be prepared to die for God', kids told in state school classes

THE AUSTRALIAN OCTOBER 17, 2015 12:00AM NATASHA BITA

Christian evangelists are teaching students they should "die for their faith if necessary" and to "thank God for the gift of cancer".

A workbook listed for religious education lessons in Year 9 in NSW government schools tells teenagers they have "sinned and deserve God's punishment" and that the world is in "deep trouble".

The accompanying teachers' manual, titled You: An Introduction, says students should be taught to "submit our bodies to God's will ... even by dying for our faith if necessary".

The lesson plan says students should think about their "lies, deceit, manipulation, anger, lust, jealousy, hatred and worship of ourselves": "It's a heavy weight we cannot bear, and one day we will be held accountable for it and will pay for it with our death."

The student workbook includes a letter with the headline "Thank God for the gift of cancer!" written by Bronwyn Chin, who died of pancreatic cancer in 2013. "I would like to grow old with my husband and see my kids grow up. But God appears to have a better plan," the letter says.

Another worksheet features a girl who wonders why her mother has cancer and concludes "my mum's cancer was the result of a mucked-up and broken world caused by sin".

The teaching guide links menstruation and sickness to sin. "Now, being sick or having your period isn't a sin — but it reminds us that the body and therefore all of humanity now live with the curse of sin," it says.

Religious teachers, who are usually volunteers, are instructed to read a passage from the Bible that states "wives should submit to their husbands in everything".

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The teaching manual elaborates that wives are to submit to their husbands flowing leadership", while husbands must "care for her needs and die for her if necessary".

In another lesson plan, students "address how and why the world and their lives are in deep trouble". The aim is to "leave students with the knowledge that our world and humanity are stuck in sin".

A NSW Education Department spokesman yesterday said it had not endorsed the material.

"The Anglican Church is currently revising its curriculum and is working with the department to ensure any materials used for the purposes of special religious education in NSW public schools are consistent with departmental policies and delivered in an age-appropriate manner," he said.

You: An Introduction is listed as the sole curriculum resource for Year 9 students in term three by Generate Ministries, the group the NSW Education Department has authorised to deliver religious instruction in state schools. Generate Ministries, an alliance of the Scripture Union, Anglican, Presbyterian and Baptist churches, supplies religious instruction teachers for NSW state schools.

The Fairness in Religion in Schools lobby group warned the "harmful" workbook exposed teens to "damaging messages".

"These materials push views towards sex, sexuality, abortion, suicide, homosexuality, sin,

The NSW Education Department does not require school teachers to supervise religious classes and has banned schools disseminating lesson details.

Religious education is conducted in every NSW state school but parents can have their children opt out.

Victoria will abolish religious classes next year, replacing them with healthy relationship lessons.

Other to 1 April 11 Hazardan

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deric 40 MINUTES AGO

Human suffering, particularly among the young, is one of the most difficult matters to reconcile with the belief in a loving God. I struggle with this myself and I know it's grist for the atheist mill. There are many reasons to believe in God and I simply say I don't understand God's purpose as to why we (I) suffer but I accept that there is a purpose that God in His infinite wisdom has for us. Atheists would simply say bad luck you drew the short straw to the young whose lives are cut short. Hardly uplifting.

Suffering often leads to an expansion of human love, self-sacrifice and caring for others. Maybe that's the purpose?

LIKE REPLY



tim 44 MINUTES AGO

That really isn't cool. Who comes up with this stuff?

LIKE REPLY



Vicki 45 MINUTES AGO

Load of rubbish and shouldn't be anywhere near a school. If people want their children to have a religious upbringing there are plenty of extra curricular ways to get it.

LIKE REPLY



Lyn 57 MINUTES AGO

Ubelievable. Maybe the ones preaching about sins are the real sinners.

No wonder the kids are getting so mixed up

How about telling kids they are not sins but mistakes in lifes journey, the key to life maybe perhaps learning from the mistakes and not repeating them.

LIKE REPLY



Terry D 1 Hour ago

«/ A workbook listed for religious education lessons in Year 9 in NSW government schools tells teenagers they have "sinned and deserve God's punishment" and that the world is in "deep trouble"./»

Hands up those who haven't sinned (i.e. haven't done something wrong) and who don't deserve God's punishment?

1 LIKE REPLY



tim 43 MINUTES AGO

@Terry D So you think you deserve to be punished by an imaginary father figure? Speak for yourself Tezza.

LIKE REPLY



Sean 1 HOUR AGO

It's wrong but nowhere near as wrong and without the repercussions of telling them to kill for their faith. Perhaps you'll write about that next but I doubt it; it falls outside PC.

1 LIKE REPLY