

Prayer before the Kansas House of Representatives – January 23, 1996

When Minister Joe Wright, senior minister of the Central Christian Church of Wichita was asked to open the new session of the Kansas House of Representatives on January 23, 1996, everyone was expecting the usual generalities, but this is what they heard:

"Heavenly Father, We come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance.

We know Your Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good" but that is exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium And reversed our values.

We have exploited the poor And called it the lottery.

We have rewarded laziness And called it welfare.

We have killed our unborn And called it choice.

We have shot abortionists And called it justifiable.

We have neglected to discipline our children And called it building self esteem.

We have abused power And called it politics.

We have coveted our neighbor's possessions And called it ambition.

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography And called it freedom of speech and expression.

We have ridiculed the time honored values of our Forefathers And called it enlightenment.

Search us, Oh, God, And know our hearts today; Cleanse us from every sin And set us free.

Amen!"

While not word-for-word accurate, this is a fair transcription of an actual prayer delivered before the Kansas House of Representatives that day

At least one legislator did walk out during the prayer, according to the *Kansas City Star*. Others made speeches criticizing what the Democratic House Minority Leader called "the extreme, radical views" reflected in the prayer. It was aired nationally on radio in February 1996 by Paul Harvey.