

A.W. Tozer's Answer to the Decline of American Christendom

Read Time: 4 Minutes 12 Seconds

In looking back on the history of America as a Christian nation, the 20th century particularly will stand out as a time of American Christendom's rapidly declining influence on the nation's culture. Of the various episodes of disregard for Christ's ekklesia kingdom assignment from Matthew 16:18 to engage with the culture, the 1950-60s surely were the all-time low.

It was then that the diabolical Warren Court [1953-1969] began and completed its crusade against Christianity. Of the Warren Court's audacious docket of abominations, two decisions were the most brazen: the 1962 removal of prayer from public schools in *Engel v. Vitale*, and the 1963 banishment of the Bible from public education in *Abington School District v. Schempp*.

A later pair of misbegotten Supreme Court's adjudications warrants mentioning as well. The first concerned the outright fabrication in 1973 of a 'constitutional right' to kill unborn babies in *Roe v. Wade*, while the second in 2015 called upon the no less fictitious 'right' to homosexual intercourse and constitutional marriage in *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

We should pray that a spiritual fire begins in Washington, DC, affecting the culture and public education, along with jolting the Legislative, Judicial and Executive branches of local, state and federal government into righteous action.

The German political activist Rudi Dutschke [1940-1979] coined the slogan "long march through the institutions" as a way for

Marxism to establish the conditions for revolt and revolution through political warfare. Without taking recourse to Marxism's forced methods of guile and radicalism, would it be conceivable for those filled with His Spirit and the mind of Christ to undertake a righteous "march through the institutions" in order to reestablish the foundations laid down by America's Founders?

If American Christendom is to enjoy a resurgence, it will undoubtedly require a strategy quite different from Christendom's current arrangement of "buildings, butts and budgets." The latter approach has been tried and found wanting.

"If the church in the second half of this century," wrote A.W. Tozer, "is to recover from the injuries she suffered in the first half there must appear a new type of preacher. The proper, ruler-of-the-synagogue type will never do. Neither will the priestly type of man who carries out his duties, takes his pay and asks no questions, nor the smooth-talking pastoral type who knows how to make the Christian religion acceptable to everyone.

"Another kind of religious leader must arise among us. He must be of the old prophet type, a man who has seen visions of God and has heard a voice from the throne. When he comes [and I pray God there will be not one but many] he will stand in flat contradiction to everything our smirking, smooth civilization holds dear. He will contradict, denounce and protest in the name of God and will earn the hatred and opposition of a large segment of Christendom. Such a man is likely to be lean, rugged, blunt-spoken and a little bit angry with the world. He will love Christ and the souls of men to the point of willingness to die for the glory of the one and the salvation of the other. But he will fear nothing that breathes with mortal breath."

Next week we'll celebrate the 8th anniversary of Louisiana

Governor Bobby Jindal's "The Response: A Call to Repentance for a Nation in Crisis," held at the time at the Pete Maravich Assembly Center on the LSU campus. What a day that was!

In our preparation and planning for the event, Governor Bobby Jindal hosted 72 Evangelical leaders at the Governor's Mansion. ABC affiliate KTBS sent their reporter Rick Rowe and a camera crew to document the historic occasion. Rowe's three minute report was broadcast over a two week period to a large audience in the Arkansas-Louisiana-Texas region.

Governor Jindal's courage in 2015 is a call to contemporary Christian leaders to move into the public square with ideas and power. Scripture is full of illustrations of the fact that the enemies of God are most confident of their strength when the day of their fall is imminent. "Thus also it frequently appears in the history of the salvation of God's elect: their case seems to be the most hopeless immediately before the hand of divine mercy snatches them as brands from the burning ... Man's extremity is God's opportunity," it says in A.W. Pink's "The Life of David."

To exemplify this, let's read David's prayer in Psalm 18:3-4; 6-7: "I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I was delivered from my enemies. The waves of death engulfed me, the currents of chaos overwhelmed me. In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried out to my God. From His heavenly temple He heard my voice; He listened to my cry for help. The earth heaved and shook; the roots of the mountains trembled; they heaved because He was angry."

 A.W. Pink comments: "In verses 3 and 4 David recalls pathetically the past experiences when, like an animal caught in the nets, those who hunted him so relentlessly were ready to close in upon and seize their prey. 'In his distress,' he says, 'I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God' [v. 4]. Though it was but the call of one weak solitary voice, unheard on earth, it reached heaven, and the answer

shook all creation: 'He heard my voice out of His temple ... Then the earth shook and trembled.' [vs. 6, 7].

"One saint in his extremity put in motion the mighty powers of Omnipotence: overwhelming is the contrast between cause and effect. Wonderful as the greatness, equally marvelous is the swiftness of the answer: 'Then the earth shook.'"

Gideon's and Rahab's are beginning to stand. {eoa}

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