

Attention, Evangelical Leaders Who Opposed Trump: We're Still Waiting for an Apology

Strikeouts, RBIs, home runs, yards rushing, yards passing, 3-pointers, free throws, fouls: These and other statistics make athletes incredibly accountable.

Unfortunately, many endeavors in life, particularly where Christian leaders are concerned, don't carry that kind of accountability. They are far too seldom called out when they get something wrong. I'm aware of 1 Chronicles 16:22a (MEV): "Do not touch My anointed." But does that make them infallible and therefore insulated from any kind of scrutiny? And aren't all of us who are in Christ anointed? (See 1 John 2:20, 27.)

Paul's Mean Tweet

Let me be clear: I believe we're to respect and pray for those in leadership positions (1 Tim. 2:1-2). The apostle Paul once appeared before the Sanhedrin and said to Ananias, the high priest, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall!" (Acts 23:3b). That's a pretty mean tweet! But he later apologized, saying he didn't know Ananias was the high priest (v. 5). He respected the position, even though Ananias had him punched in the mouth.

There were many evangelical leaders who vehemently opposed Trump in 2016 and/or 2020. They include Max Lucado (author and pastor of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio), Russell Moore (then president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission) and Beth Moore (Bible teacher and president of Living Proof Ministries) to mention a few of the most prominent. I'm not attacking any of them

personally or professionally; I respect the fruit they've produced for the kingdom of God. But they got this one dead wrong, and I think their "strike-out" stats should be brought out into the open.

Quite frankly, I believe many evangelical leaders owe the body of Christ an apology. They are influential, and in my view, at least a little implicated in this hideous position in which we find ourselves.

Blessings and Curses

Trump was the most pro-life, pro-religious freedom, pro-Christian values and pro-Israel president we've had in my lifetime—maybe ever.

Conversely, Biden has been the worst archenemy to our Christian values in my lifetime (as would be Hillary Clinton). He has destroyed our country in ways that affect us all, including the church. This administration is all about infanticide and indoctrination of our children with LGBTQ and transgender propaganda. It is pushing for hormone treatments, puberty blockers and actual genital mutilation in our schools *without parental consent*.

We voted for *blessings*; they voted for *curses* (Deut. 30:19). We went from the strongest economy we've had in modern history to the worst economy and highest inflation in modern history. Our 401(k)s have plummeted, and we have all become poorer. We've gone from the most secure border in our history to a totally open border—open to terrorists, drug cartels and human traffickers. We've gone from peace through strength to a disaster in Afghanistan and possibly an endless war in Ukraine because of Biden's weakness. We've gone from being energy independent for the first time in 67 years and gas for \$2 a gallon to begging countries that hate us for oil and paying more than double at the pump. *And these self-inflicted calamities directly affect the finances of churches and*

ministries.

Thank God for the midterms (assuming it's not already too late), or we would be headed for another Venezuela. Remember, Venezuela was once a stable democracy and the richest country in South America. All it took was an incompetent and power-hungry leader who let the nation's debt and inflation get out of control.

20/20 Foresight

As they say, "Hindsight is 20/20." But was it all hindsight? In 2016 and 2020, those evangelical leaders were appalled at Trump's brash demeanor, rudeness and insults. The clincher (in 2016) was the *Access Hollywood* tape of Trump's voice speaking vulgar words about a woman, which, by the way, no one I know condoned. But you would think if anyone could extend grace because it was recorded 11 years prior, it would be a Christian. Who better understands people can change over time, as with Paul, who had Christians murdered before his Damascus Road experience.

Those anti-Trump Evangelicals let those outward Trumpisms manipulate their decision-making. I don't think they really thought through where the paths of Clinton and Biden would likely lead us versus where a path under Trump would likely lead us. Of course, God knew, and His Holy Spirit gave millions of us insights on things to come (John 16:13). We're not surprised. I can't help but think some of those leaders were as spiritually astute to what God was saying (about this one issue) as a fence post.

Political candidates will say anything to get elected. We must pay less attention to what they say—good or bad—and more attention to what we feel they will actually do. In Matthew 21:28-32, Jesus said, "A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' He answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he repented and went.

Then he came to the second, and said likewise. He answered, 'I will go, sir,' but did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" The priests and elders answered, "The first."

Being a Sadducee Is Sad, You See

Many religious leaders in Jesus' day were blinded to what He was doing. He even called them "blind guides" (Matt. 15:14b, NIV). I'm not calling every evangelical leader who didn't support Trump a Pharisee or Sadducee, but I do think it could have been easy to fall into a similar religious mentality, based on past traditions, while missing the atypical thing God was doing.

Had those same individuals been at Jericho, they would have gasped when God decided to use Rahab the prostitute as His instrument in Israel's conquest of the city. And God even included her in "The Faith Hall of Fame" (Heb. 11). And they must be perplexed that God would call David, who didn't just say something offensive but had a woman's husband killed to have her, "a man after His own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14b, MEV). And Peter denied Jesus three times. How could God possibly use him to manifest miracles (Acts 3:6-7) and get thousands saved by his preaching (Acts 4:4)?

Jimmy Carter was a moral man who boldly proclaimed he was born again. He was even a Sunday school teacher. He fit the perfect mold for Christians. But how did that work out for us? Good for Carter that Biden came along to strip him of the title of "Worst President Ever."

Jesus said, "Do not judge by appearance [superficially and arrogantly], but judge fairly and righteously" (John 7:24, AMP). When Samuel came to Jesse's house to anoint a king, David was so unlikely that he wasn't even in the lineup with his seven brothers (1 Sam. 16:10). Maybe he was out typing mean tweets or something. Samuel chose David and said, "The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward

appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7b, NKJV). May we pray that God show us candidates' hearts. {eoa}

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