

Do Not Underestimate the Significance of January 6 in the Minds of Many Americans

Read Time: 3 Minutes 59 Seconds

For the vast majority of conservative Christian voters, the events of Jan. 6, 2021 were truly shocking. But they had nothing to do with us personally. We didn't storm the Capitol. We didn't threaten the security of our nation's governing officials.

To the contrary, we were in our homes or at work, watching the news like everyone else, as horrified as others by the events of the day.

As for the tens of thousands who descended on D.C., the great majority of them were there to pray for a righteous outcome to the elections.

Prayer, not rioting, was their goal. (If not prayer, then simply solidarity.)

As for the fringe groups that came ready for battle, such as the Black Robed Regiment or the Oath Keepers, they were not us.

They may have used similar language to us at times, talking about revival and the need to bring America back to God. But their mindset and methods were far different than ours.

And as we heard more about their ideology and goals at DC events like the Jericho March and Stop the Steal rallies of Dec. 2020, we were shocked.

As a ministry leader related to me regarding Bill Cook, founder of the Black Robed Regiment, "he sent me a text Jan.

4th bragging about what was going to take place on Jan. 6th. I was alarmed and stopped inviting him to my meetings.”

To be sure, this “fringe” minority was not and is not limited to a few small extremist groups. A dangerous conflating of the gospel, politics, nationalism and potential calls to violence has spread like cancer in some of our circles.

That’s one reason I wrote “The Political Seduction of the Church: How Millions of Americans Have Conflated Politics with the Gospel.” And that’s one reason I helped co-author a collective leadership statement on “NAR” (the so-called New Apostolic Reformation) and Christian nationalism.

But, to repeat, for the vast majority of us, Jan. 6 did not represent us in any way, shape, size, or form. They were not us.

In the minds of the American people, however, stoked by the left-leaning media and fueled by exaggerated reports of the scope of Jan. 6, all of us who voted for Trump were there ourselves.

As I noted many times in the aftermath of that event, the left now had its definitive proof. Trump voters, who were now grouped together with all conservative Christians, were dangerous insurrectionists, not to mention white supremacists and potentially violent nationalists. Beware of people like this!

That’s why the over-the-top, hysterical warnings about our very democracy being at stake played so well with many Democratic voters.

The message was simple: “Armed Christian nationalists stand poised to take over the country, impose a theocracy, arrest any woman who would dare have an abortion and more. They must be stopped at all costs!”

It is true that “fear for the future of our democracy” did not show up as a voting factor in the exit polls.

And Carol Platt Libeau said that, “President Biden kicked off the apocalyptic party with his ‘red speech,’ trashing MAGA Republicans as an existential threat to American democracy. His media sycophants faithfully picked up the refrain.

“By late October, MSNBC personalities had used the words fascism or fascist more than 1600 times this year. The ‘View’s’ Sunny Hostin compared suburban women who vote Republican to roaches. ‘Historian’ Michael Beschloss wins some sort the prize, though. What’s at stake? He said: ‘whether we will be a democracy in the future, whether our children will be arrested and conceivably killed.’

“The press has become a laughingstock. What will they say a year from now?—when our children are still alive and we’re amid a routine presidential election season?”

The problem is that a lot of Americans believe this is true, and it is very possible, perhaps probable, that these “Chicken Little” warnings helped light a fire under their feet.

After all, with the Supreme Court overturning Roe, didn’t that prove that Christian fundamentalists, who now ran the court, had outlawed abortion across America? Wasn’t this a portent of things to come?

On our end (speaking again of Christian conservatives), Jan. 6 remains a dark anomaly, something the great majority of us cannot relate to at all.

But as we have moved on from that day, those on the left have not, with article after article warning about the dangers of Christian nationalism and Jan. 6 serving as the precursor of what is to come.

This doesn’t mean for a second that we should stop talking

about revival and renewal and reformation. It just means that even if we are clear in our language, we should expect to be misunderstood.

That's where building personal relationships is crucial. It is only by people getting to know our hearts and see our lives that they will really understand who we are.

As for dangerous fringe groups, they are not going away anytime soon, and they will provide more than enough fodder for the left.

I, for my part, will be shouting from the rooftops that those groups do not represent us, and a thousand times more, do not represent our Lord. {eoa}

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