

How Do You Kill 11 Million People?

New York Times best-selling author Andy Andrews wrote a book by this title a few years ago.

I highly recommend it. This figure represents the actual number of people killed by Adolf Hitler, not including ordinary civilians and military war dead.

In the book, Andy gives a very uncomplicated answer to the chilling inquiry: You lie to them.

When Hitler wrote his story in *Mein Kampf*, he penned these famous words: "The great masses of the people will more easily fall victim to a big lie than a small one."

His henchman, Adolf Eichmann, encountered sworn statements during the Nuremberg trials that revealed his deceptive words to Jews.

"Jews: At last, it can be reported to you that the Russians are advancing on our eastern front," he said, according to Neil Bascomb's *Hunting Eichmann*. "I apologize for the hasty way we brought you into our protection. Unfortunately, there was little time to explain. You have nothing to worry about. We want only the best for you. You will leave here shortly and be sent to very fine places indeed. You will work there, your wives will stay at home, and your children will go to school. You will have wonderful lives. We will all be terribly crowded on the trains, but the journey is short. Men? Please keep families together and board the railcars in an orderly manner. Quickly now, my friends, we must hurry!"

In America today, while we are not facing bold-faced lies from a Nazi regime, we are daily being bombarded by falsehoods from the media, politicians, high-profile individuals and even

religious leaders the enemy is using to manipulate the masses. Sinful lifestyles are portrayed as attractive. Unbiblical positions are presented as beneficial. Deceived celebrities are paraded as role models whose lives are to be imitated.

Remaining optimists yet also realists in the midst of America's rapidly accelerating moral decline will require embracing three important steps. Here's the deal: Unless we experience a true spiritual awakening in our nation, we'd better prepare for the perilous times that Scripture predicts (2 Tim. 3:1).

Standing Strong When Surrounded by Lies

1. Hold fast to the truth. Contrary to what many in our relativistic culture propagate, there are three components of a biblical worldview that will ensure stability, success and security in these difficult days:

- Truth exists and is knowable.
- Truth upheld brings blessings.
- Truth disregarded brings consequences.

Multitudes believe today there is no such thing as absolute truth. In the name of tolerance and diversity, they want to free society from "outdated" standards for a more progressive, enlightened approach to life.

Christians must make a quality decision to hold 100 percent to the eternal, unchanging Word of God as their final authority in all matters of faith and practice. While Charles Darwin, in his *Origin of Species*, said over 200 times, "Let us assume," we will not base our lives on assumptions but certainties!

Recently I had the privilege of visiting the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory in Kentucky. For over 125 years, they have produced countless millions of bats for major league ball players. I watched the procedure they have followed for decades, where they have the pattern bat and every bat must be

aligned with the model with no microscopic alteration. They follow meticulously a standard and will not allow deviation.

In our present culture that regularly tries to “invent ways of doing evil” (Rom. 1:30, NIV), it is our holy obligation to honor divinely revealed patterns for church leadership, marriage, childrearing, financial stewardship, sexual purity, mate selection, healthy living, truth-telling, business practices and righteous entertainment plus the protection of the sanctity of human life.

2. Pray for others to recognize truth. Have you ever listened to the gobbledygook of so-called intellectuals or the twisted rationalizations of celebrities and thought, *Can't they see their confusion or the inevitable destruction that lies ahead?*

Remember the Bible tells us, “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4).

Therefore, we need to intercede for God to lift the veil and break through with conviction and revelation.

While in Louisville I also visited with my wife the Muhammad Ali Center. The man who once said he was the greatest now says, “God gave me this physical impediment to show me I’m not the greatest—He [Allah] is.” He also says, “I conquered the world and it didn’t bring me true happiness.”

Those of you who know me from my *Divine Appointments* book can be assured that I prayed the living God would reveal Himself to this man before he exits Planet Earth.

In 1 Timothy 2:1-4, we are instructed to make intercession for everyone because “this is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

3. Unite with others to declare and demonstrate truth. First Timothy 3:15 tells us that the church is the “pillar and foundation of the truth.” In other words, we authenticate truth as onlookers see it visibly manifested in our lives—individually and corporately.

Today it is exciting to watch as previously silent leaders who held back in addressing controversial issues—especially related to the radical gay agenda—are coming alive. Fear of man, the idol of attendance, man-pleasing and submitting to intimidation are being swept aside as leaders are declaring truth with charity and clarity.

In our city, we decided it was time to stand up and be counted for righteousness. No more silent, spineless shepherds of the flock. No more disunity keeping us weak and ineffective. The homosexual avalanche hitting the church and destroying our religious freedom necessitates a coming together not to reframe but rather reclaim marriage according to God’s eternal plan.

Recently, over 30 leaders in Nashville, Tenn. (including country icon Ricky Skaggs and a Messianic rabbi), came together in humility and unity for an event entitled “Honoring God, Honoring Marriage.” There were also a number of other leaders who had to be out of town yet still gave written commendations.

We met in a ballroom of a hotel—300 concerned citizens from diverse churches and ministries. A dangerous storm, flash flooding and tornado warnings that strangely came just two hours before did not deter us.

I was privileged to serve as host while my longtime friend and partner in the Brownsville Revival, Michael Brown, addressed us on the topic “Marriage Really Matters.”

Awareness was raised; faith was imparted; resources were made available; intercessory prayer was offered. Testimonies were

heard by four individuals redeemed from destructive sexual lifestyles. A strong statement went forth to the entire city, state and now the nation that Nashville Christians are not bigots, homophobes or wimpy believers cowering in caves. We've chosen: We're not going to sit this one out and one day have to ask forgiveness from our children and grandchildren for dereliction of duty.

The Tennessean newspaper on Sunday (the largest circulation day of the week) ran a favorable article, titled "Event to Take Stand on Marriage," stating we were "gathering to make a unified statement about honoring marriage as a covenant between one man and one woman."

Take a look at a picture from this past Sunday's event and call to mind the challenge that martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer gave us in the midst of the Nazi Holocaust: "Our greatest moral responsibility is the future that we leave to our children."

What would happen if leaders and churches in cities all across the United States of America did similar events? Isn't it time for compassionate action and courageous leadership to arise?

What might God do that we can't do in our own natural strength if we came together in humility and unity and charity to simply send a message that amidst the lies surrounding us in society, the church will not be silent and spineless but rather a shining light of hope and truth in the darkness?

If not us, who? If not now, when?

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