

How the Current Wave of Anti-Christian Sentiment Could Backfire

With everyone from pop culture icons to the mainstream media to Internet memes to the president himself seemingly bashing Christianity, is there no hope for a resurgence in the cultural battle?

According to one analyst, the widespread anti-Christian campaign may be ultimately be its own undoing. In a recent *TIME* magazine article, Dave Carney offers a compelling argument that the religious bullying and persecution could be the factor that unites and mobilizes Christians to once again become a force to be reckoned with in the public arena.

Despite findings that the percentage of those who identify as Christians has dropped sharply over the past decade or so, Carney points out that evangelicals have only seen a 0.9 percent decline. Further, while Christian denominations in the cited study lost 7.8 percent of the religious “market share” between 2007 and 2014, the fact remains that roughly 7 in 10 Americans still identify as Christian.

Though arguments could be made against the strength of conviction or faithfulness to Christianity for some of those self-reported respondents, the fact remains that—despite years of cultural leaders hammering against Christian beliefs, traditional values and religious freedom—the vast majority of Americans still chooses to identify as such.

Politically speaking, there is tremendous untapped potential for Christians to exert influence and power over the nation’s direction. Unfortunately, much of the reason that potential remains untapped is Christians’ own fault.

“Even before this troubling trend was reported, too many Christian voters had dropped out of the political process already,” Carney writes. “In the past decade, about 78 million U.S. adults self-identified as evangelical in their beliefs, but reportedly only about 46 million were registered to vote, and only about 28 million cast a ballot in the 2004 presidential race.”

With barely one-third of all evangelicals exercising their right to vote for this nation’s leadership, it’s no wonder that Christians’ voices have continued to be silenced over the past decade—we’ve often chosen not to speak up when it matters most.

Identifying several recent escalations in “Christian-bashing” across the country, Carney believes that we are close to reaching the breaking point where Christians will eventually say enough is enough.

“These attacks on Christianity have the potential to create a populist movement across America, uniting Christians who have become disillusioned with government institutions and political leaders, and who are fed up with the attacks on the Christian values that built our nation,” he writes. “The candidates who speak to evangelicals and their values, and who actively seek their support will find a massive latent block of voters waiting to be excited.”

With the mounting attacks on faith and traditional values building seemingly daily, Carney thinks the looming 2016 presidential election may see a massive demographic shift in who turns out to the polls, one with massive consequences in the way Christians in America operate, and how the nation itself will treat people of faith.

“Those looking to forecast the end of the evangelical voting block should take a careful look at one of the lessons from Barack Obama’s 2008 election—who comes out to vote matters,”

Carney writes. "Just a small increase in the turnout of the evangelical vote could change the political landscape dramatically.

"It is just these type of studies and reports on the demise of the religion that will drive even more public debate about the need for Christian values. The logical result will be a clearing of the pews on Election Day."