

I'm Angry, and You Should Be Too!

In the aftermath of the assassination attempt on President Trump, we need to take stock of our toxic environment in America, where podcasters, politicians and pundits' traffic in hate, corroding our culture. We know it's a sin to be angry about things God's not angry about, but do we realize it's also a sin not to be angry about things He is angry about?

Watching a demonically inspired 20-year-old discharge his weapon with murderous intent on a U.S. president, kill a devoted husband and father at the scene, recognize an inexcusable lapse of security on the grounds plus continue having to put up with those incessantly bombarding us with rage-filled rhetoric and imagery of violence—it's time to do as the Bible directs: "Be angry, yet do not sin"(Eph. 4:26a, BSB).

Pastors can no longer play it safe, trying to avoid addressing cultural issues like this, but instead must warn their flocks of what's impacting them and their families as "watchmen on the wall." Jesus told us we were to be "salt," preventing societal decay. "If the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any one of them, that person is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand" (Ezek. 33:6, NKJV).

Exposing Evil

Hatemongers drum up vitriol on both right and left sides of the political spectrum, but the latter leads the pack by regularly branding our former president as "Hitler ... Nazi ... racist ... Fascist dictator ... the enemy of democracy ... MAGA extremist." So should we be surprised when someone fueled by incendiary statements steps up to take him out? After all,

Biden recently told donors on a phone call, “We’re done talking about this debate. It’s time to put Trump in a bullseye!” (Note: Later he admitted it was a “mistake.” but the damage was done.)

We can no longer look the other way or plead ignorance. Lives are literally at stake. The grieving sister of the husband and father shot as a bystander in the Butler, Pennsylvania, event said, “This hatred for one man took the life of the one man we loved the most.” The hatred is irrational, and the rhetoric is dangerous.

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Speaking Specifically

Consider the irresponsible cover of the once-respectable New Republic magazine, portraying Donald Trump as Hitler with the headline “American Fascism. What it Would Look Like.” How about Joe Scarborough pontificating on his “Morning Joe” show, which pretends to be a legitimate news program, “Trump kept Hitler’s speeches next to his bed ... you hear it in his words and see it in his rallies—Fascist Hitler-like rhetoric!”?

One of the panelists on “The View” (started by Barbara Walters as a fun and stimulating time for “lady chat”) twice labeled former President Trump as the Antichrist. The day after the Trump shooting, Martha Raddatz (ABC) told listeners that Trump said, “If I don’t get elected, there’s gonna’ be a bloodbath for this country!” when the actual March 16 reference was 100% about economics and Trump’s proposal for tariffs on cars coming here unfairly.

How about Stephen Colbert, CBS; Joy Reid, MSNBC; Joy Behar, ABC; Jim Acosta, CNN? And how about political race baiters with animosity on steroids such as Lynne Cheney, Maxine Waters and Adam Schiff? The ongoing drumbeats of invective and insidious personal attacks must stop, and we need righteous

anger motivating masses to speak up.

Resisting Republicans

Republicans espousing conservative values receive the brunt of the attacks. Consider Presidents Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield and William McKinley were assassinated; Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and Trump miraculously missed being fatalities. Trump declared, "It was God alone who prevented the unthinkable from happening," while Reagan told John Beckett, co-founder of Intercessors for America, "I firmly believe in intercessory prayer, and I know that it's prayer that sustains me."

Time to Turn

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Conservative, patriotic zealots on the Right, especially ambitious podcasters, are not exempt from hateful speech. They're fewer in number and visibility, but they're out there, and they need to likewise turn and curb the vitriol [I'm not referring here to comical parodies done by the likes of the Babylon Bee, Christian counterpart to "Saturday Night Live"].

Trump is known for being bombastic and a street fighter, but since his brush with death, scores are praying not only for his safety but more of a statesmanship, which does seem more evident since the assassination attempt and expressed commitment to unify America.

Franklin Graham spoke at the Republican National Convention and has made a personal appeal to Trump to remove the inappropriate curse words in his rallies. Maybe he'll also soften some of his trademark sarcastic nicknames and steer clear of spontaneous mockery that bursts out of teleprompter speeches (I cringed when he poked fun at Pelosi's 82-year-old

husband, attacked with a hammer at his home). All of this is corrosive to our culture and should be stopped.

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph. 4:31). Proverbs 6:16-19 identifies six areas God hates because they bring enormous harm to individuals, marriages, families, relationships, reputations, careers and society itself. In this list are pride, lying, hands shedding innocent blood [abortion?] and sowing discord.

Here's the Deal

In a similar seriously divided time in our history, another president, Abraham Lincoln, set an example for us to follow when he said, “With malice toward none,” meaning there should be no intention to harm others, “and with charity for all” meaning we should demonstrate God’s love to all, including enemies and opponents. The brilliant Black statesman and Christian leader George Washington Carver added to his legacy by challenging us with these words: “I will never let another man ruin my life by making me hate him.”

It’s time for all of us to draw upon the grace of God and do our part. With the 2024 presidential election drawing near, let’s lower the toxic temperature in our nation and elevate civility as we engage in respectful and robust discussions with those from whom we differ. In our quest to restore America to the vision and values of our Founding Fathers, our time is rapidly running out.

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