

In Wake of Trump Shooting, We Must All Tone Things Down

As we all sit here stunned, watching the footage of the attempted assassination of former President Trump, it really is a time for reflection. Are we contributing to this atmosphere of hatred and violence? What kind of emotions do we stir up with the words we speak and the memes we post? What are we fomenting? To what end?

With that in mind, I posted the following on X at 6:48 p.m. Eastern on Saturday:

I truly pray it is not too late.

At this moment, as I write, it is all so fresh, The sights and sounds of the moment are beyond surreal. Yet this really happened—all of it.

Someone apparently had such animosity toward Trump that he attempted to murder him. The former president came within an inch of losing his life, only to stand up courageously and defiantly, fist raised, in what has already become an iconic moment in American history.

Breaking news, Spirit-filled stories. Subscribe to Charisma on YouTube now!

And there is the news of two dead—the shooter and an innocent victim in the crowd—along with two innocent victims who were critically injured. What madness.

As I write these words, political leaders from the left and right are expressing their solidarity with Trump and their absolute repudiation of political violence. But will we also hear from those who literally wished violence against Trump? Will they express regret for their poisonous words?

I'm thinking of Hollywood celebrities who openly expressed their personal death wishes against him. Or news commentators who likened Trump to Hitler.

Should we be surprised that someone decided that enough was enough and it was time to take out Trump? Did we learn nothing from the attempted murder of Republican Congressman Steve Scalise in 2017?

There are also those on the right who have spoken against President Biden in the ugliest, most irresponsible ways. And there are radical right-wing militias, rallying their followers to prepare for war against what they call an illegitimate administration. (In fact, there are violent militia-like groups on both the left and right.) Where will all this lead?

As someone on the front lines of the culture wars for more than 20 years, I understand the gravity of the issues that divide us. In many ways, they are literally issues of life and death (need I say more than the word "abortion"?). I do not minimize the depth of the political divide in our country today, nor is there an easy path forward toward national unity. Not by a country mile.

Get your FREE CHARISMA NEWSLETTERS today! Stay up to date with current issues, Holy Spirit news, Christian teachings, Charisma videos & more!

But all of us are responsible for the words we speak, for the posts we share, for the memes we create, for the environments we shape. And all of us would do well to look in the mirror and ask ourselves some honest questions: Am I fostering godly conviction or breeding vile hatred? Am I helping to produce courage and fortitude, or do my words lead to hostility and disdain?

Put another way, since everything reproduces after its kind, based on God's immutable laws established in creation, what

are we reproducing? If the emotions and attitudes we stir up were multiplied time and again, would the end result be good or bad—very bad?

If others follow our lead, will they be more compassionate? More civil? More gracious? More longsuffering? Will they be kinder and more caring—all while having strong, immovable, moral convictions and impeccable, uncompromising moral standards? Or will they be more vile, more hateful, more short-tempered, more insulting, even more violent?

There is a world of difference between a righteous indignation that moves good people to stand up for what is right and an unrighteous anger that leads to attempted assassinations of political leaders.

The former attitude is moved by justice and truly cares for the hurting and oppressed. It reflects the heart of God. The latter attitude is fueled by animosity and rage. It does no good and only causes pain. It reflects the nature of the devil.

Let us then, be disseminators of light, not darkness, agents of God rather than servants of Satan, calling for courage and conviction around righteous causes but with civility toward our political and ideological adversaries. Otherwise, all of us lose.

We can be uncompromising in our stands without acting like animals. Let us all step higher!

Join Charisma Magazine Online to follow everything the Holy Spirit is doing around the world!

Dr. Michael Brown () is the host of the nationally syndicated The Line of Fire radio show. He is the author of over 40 books, including "Can You be Gay and Christian?"; "Our Hands are Stained with Blood"; and "Seizing the Moment: How to Fuel the Fires of Revival." You can connect with him

on Facebook, X or YouTube.