

It's Time for a Populist Christian Movement

The populist movement that swept Donald Trump into the presidency here in America, forced the United Kingdom to exit the European Union and roiled the politics of other European countries has been driven by the ineffectiveness, arrogance and cultural and political corruption of the Western establishment elite.

Citizens of Western democracies have finally had enough of politicians who force outrageous ideas of political correctness upon them, but leave the roads full of potholes, legions of citizens un-employed or under-employed and neighborhoods rife with crime.

And the objects of this populist rebellion are not only the politicians who have been voted out of office or defeated, like Hillary Clinton, but they have been the other elite institutional enforcers of political correctness.

After joining the politically correct left in enforcing bizarre and dangerous rules allowing men to enter the women's restrooms and dressing rooms at their stores, Target lost \$20 billion in market capitalization as the company's stock value plunged after the corporation publicly declared its support in April 2016 for the very unpopular "gender identity" transgender political agenda.

The losers weren't the elite company managers who chose to enforce their will on shareholders and customers—they were the small shareholders and institutions who saw one-third of their investment vanish due to the arrogance of out-of-touch corporate managers.

The same things happened in corporate sports.

When highly paid elite professional athletes, such as Colin Kaepernick chose to take a knee during the national anthem to support the radical anti-American Black Lives Matter movement millions of fans chose to tune out the National Football League.

When the ESPN sports network followed suit with anti-American commentary its ratings went into freefall. Ratings for ESPN's flagship program, *SportsCenter*, have dipped 10 percent. *NFL Countdown* is down 13 percent and network viewership is collectively down 10 percent when compared to 2014.

Similar results have been seen in Hollywood as conservative customers have refused to patronize the movies of stars who bash President Trump and the populist movement that brought him to the Oval Office.

The lesson seems to be that when institutions move left, they lose support among the masses of center-right consumers and voters who make up the majority in America, and in Western Europe.

And this lesson also is showing itself in our churches and religious institutions.

The leftward trend in the elite establishment churches that began in earnest in the 1960s has now driven millions of adherents out of church, even as 83 percent of Americans identify themselves as Christians.

Yet, while the vast majority of Americans claim Christianity as their faith, across the Western world, the faith itself appears to be faltering under the stewardship of its elite leaders.

In direct contravention of Christ's words as recorded in John 14:6, the hierarchy of Washington's National Cathedral has allowed Muslims clerics to preach against Christians from the pulpit and worship there on the anniversary of the start of

one of Islam's greatest anti-Christian pogroms.

In the United Kingdom, Prince Charles, who will one day head the Church of England, admonished his fellow Britons in his Christmas address to "think of Mohammed" and went on to say, "Whichever religious path we follow, the destination is the same—to value and respect the other person, accepting their right to live out their peaceful response to the love of God."

So much for the title "Defender of the Faith," which in the Latin words *Fidei Defensor* still graces British coins—and the result is seen in the pews; since 2001, some 500 Christian churches in Britain have been converted into private homes while 423 mosques have opened.

In Italy, seat of the Roman Catholicism, a priest dressed the Virgin Mary in a Muslim burqa for his church's Christmas Nativity scene, adding a boatful of refugees and a rainbow flag in place of the star of Bethlehem.

Here in America, as CHQ Chairman Richard A. Viguerie observed in his article "Failed Catholic Church Leaders Are the Problem," many American bishops have now tied themselves to big government and leftist causes.

Catholic Charities, for example, receives 65 percent of its budget from federal and state governments, and much of it is spent to import Muslim "refugees" to America.

Indeed, religious organizations such as Church World Service, Episcopal Community Development Council, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and World Relief receive as much as \$10 billion annually from the federal government, much of it spent on bringing anti-Christian Muslims to America.

In the same vein, Catholic Campaign for Human Development grants support organizations that operate in direct conflict with Catholic teachings.

Little wonder as many as 19 percent of Americans who identify as Christian claim to be unaffiliated with any church or denomination.

After Holy Week, in which we celebrate the central lesson of Christianity, we invite American Christians to spend some time contemplating why the elite institutions of our faith seem to be faltering, even as belief in Christ's teachings remains strong.

I have done so and have concluded that the same kind of populist rebellion that swept President Trump into the White House might also reinvigorate American Christianity. Just as millions of American voters picked up copies of the Constitution and began to ask out-of-touch elite politicians, "Where does it say you can do that?" we Christians should pick up our Bibles and ask out-of-touch elite church leaders, "Where does it say same-sex marriage and transgenderism are OK?" and "Where does the Bible endorse the heresy that claims God and Allah are the same"? {eo}

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