

Love Your Neighbor, But Don't Refuse to Take a Stand

Benjamin Franklin once reportedly urged his fellow patriots to hold the line and boldly stand together by warning them, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

The Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments echo this sentiment. Solomon writes in Ecclesiastes: "And if one enemy prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." Numerous times, Christ exhorts His disciples, and the church they will form, to stand together in unity. Paul expands on this theme in several epistles and describes believers of various gifts and social positions collectively as "the body of Christ."

I'm reminded of this in the wake of the recent news out of Vermont that a Christian school whose girls' basketball team refused to play a competitor with a gender-confused boy on it has now been permanently suspended from all further state-sanctioned athletic competition.

Unless you are informed by a select few in the conservative media sphere, I'd say the odds are high you haven't even heard of this story. And I'm nearly certain you haven't heard of any rigorous protest Christians levied against such an affront to basic standards of freedom and dignity. You probably go to a church that didn't even mention it this past Sunday, but did make sure to give the "we're not racists" virtue signal during the "mostly peaceful" riots of 2020.

The Western Church continues to express kindness and solidarity with everything and everyone other than its own brethren, who dare stand in the gap against the Spirit of the Age. They think they're going to Nineveh, when in reality they

are stepping over the carcasses of their own martyrs to curry favor with a world that hates them.

Before we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, we are to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. It is loving God preeminently that clarifies what it means to love our neighbor. Does it mean never warn or rebuke my neighbor? Does it mean be perpetually nice? Or does it mean loving someone enough to share God's truth, even if it may offend my neighbor? Or, let's be even more honest of what we're truly afraid of: Doing so may cost us something we hold more dear than God—which is idolatry.

Isn't it convenient that "loving your neighbor as you love yourself" has become our convenient excuse in the church for never taking a stand against anything?

And yet soon we will gather and pretend (oh, yes, sadly, that's what many of us will do) to worship at the nail-scarred feet of a suffering Savior—who was tortured to the point of disfigurement and mortal injury before he was hung out to dry on a wooden beam for the vultures. We will sing our songs in our anesthetized and hermetically sealed environments, listen to a message that will affirm yet not challenge us in the least, and then go home confident that we have checked the Jesus box.

Meanwhile, a girls' basketball team in Vermont convicts us otherwise.

The team truly loved God enough to suffer for His name and thus loved their neighbor enough not to take part in this demonically inspired insanity, belief in which puts their neighbor's soul in eternal peril. By the way, isn't it interesting that demons often refer to themselves by they/them or we/us pronouns? But I digress.

These girls have more masculinity and testosterone than the vast majority of sweater-vested posers occupying our pulpits.

If only they had motivated a generation of men who dare called themselves dads to stand for the truth in their own way.

There are 24 other Catholic and Protestant Christian schools in the state of Vermont. How many of them have said they will stand with their brethren and refuse to humor this lie from the pit of hell any longer? How many self-proclaimed Christian teachers, coaches or administrators in the Vermont public schools walked out in solidarity with their sisters in the faith?

And that's also why you haven't heard more about this story. The answer is zero.

In the end, you know a tree by its fruit. We are what we worship. The Spirit of the Age and its minions are comfortable mocking, trolling and cancelling us as Goliath was in the Valley of Elah, because we want nothing more than to be comfortable ourselves. We lack David's, who will boldly but humbly descend into that valley to challenge the enemy's dominion "so that the world may know" whose dominion this world truly is. And most of our churches would chastise such David's for being too confrontational even if one did manage to emerge.

 From where I'm sitting, there are a lot of believers who will soon be going to Holy Week services in the state of Vermont who probably shouldn't, if we're being honest—and if they are being honest with themselves. They left their sisters alone on the side of the road, and they're hardly alone in doing so. The Western Church, like Israel before her, proverbially stones the prophets and shuns those whom God has sent.

However, I want the heroic young ladies (and their coaches, parents, teachers, and administrators) of Mid Vermont Christian School to please know this: You are not alone. You play for an audience of One, and His is the only opinion that

truly matters in the end. {eo}

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