

Michael Brown: My Wish List for 2021

If you could wish for anything in 2021, what would be at the top of your list? I don't mean millennial-type wishes, such as, "I wish for peace on earth and no more conflicts." Or, "I wish that no one will get sick in 2021." Those are wonderful wishes, but they must await the Second Coming. But if you could wish for anything within the realm of earthly possibility, however far-fetched, what would you wish for? Here's my Top 5 list.

1. May we have a definitive, indisputable outcome to the presidential election.

As things stand today, we are not just dealing with tens of millions of Americans who are disappointed with the election outcome, as happens every four years. We're dealing with tens of millions of Americans who do not accept the election outcome.

At this point, barring President Trump confirming Joe Biden as our next president, without equivocation or qualification, I cannot see a large percentage of Trump supporters believing Biden actually won.

The president would have to say something like this: "I have seen detailed, inside information, and I can absolutely guarantee you that Joe Biden won this election, fair and square. Please support him and pray for him. Believe me."

Even then, many would still not believe.

Conversely, should Trump's attorneys and Congressional supporters pull off the greatest electoral miracle in history and overturn the election results, there's no way that the Biden voters would support that for a minute.

Something definitive must happen, so definitive that both sides would say, "We recognize this man as our next president, fair and square."

But how? What would convince both sides of either massive electoral fraud or of a fairly contested election?

That's why this is at the top of my wish list.

2. May the church regain its focus on Jesus and the Great Commission.

To a great extent, as followers of Jesus, many of us lost our way in 2020. Not only did the pandemic make it difficult for us to gather together for prayer, worship and fellowship, but we got consumed with election fever.

Our social media pages were often dominated by politically-related posts, either praising Trump or attacking Trump and, more recently, either pushing for "Stop the Steal" or denying there was any steal at all. For others, our whole focus was on race-related issues, as if nothing else in the entire world mattered.

Had we spent half of this time and energy focusing on drawing close to the Lord in prayer, winning the lost and loving our neighbor, we would be in a much different place today, not to mention the state of those around us.

Can you even remember what it was like to have a simple, undistracted focus on loving Jesus? On enjoying His presence in worship, digging into His Word and reaching out to non-believers, without a political thought dominating your mind throughout the day?

May we return to the simple foundations of our faith in 2021.

3. May the pandemic be a thing of the past.

I can make this short and sweet. COVID, COVID, go away, and

don't come back another day.

No more mass infections. No more reports of people dying by the thousands. No more masks. No more social distancing. No more need for controversial vaccines. No more pandemic!

4. May America awaken to the horrible persecution of our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world.

For the most part, here in America, the terrible suffering of Christians in countries like Nigeria, China and India is out of sight and out of mind. On occasion, we will be jarred by a shocking headline reporting the latest atrocities. But even then, we rarely even stop and pray, let alone shed a tear or ask ourselves, "What can we do?"

We read things like, "Three unidentified men shot and killed a pastor in the east Indian state of Jharkhand while he was returning home with his wife after baptizing new believers, according to a report." Then we go back to checking sports scores, following up on the latest salacious news story or giving ourselves to something else mundane.

But this pastor was part of our own family, murdered because he was a Christian. And what about his widowed wife and orphaned children? Yet reports indicate that the persecution of Christians in 2021 will only increase.

May 2021 be the year when the body worldwide begins to beat with one, united heart.

5. May 2021 be known as a year of truth.

I recently opined that, "If there is any one thing that strikes me looking back at this calamitous and difficult year it is that we are experiencing a deep crisis of trust."

We are assured that everything is not as it appears to be, that behind every news report is a hidden agenda, that the most powerful people on the planet are secretly working

together to destroy us, and that massive conspiratorial plots are manipulating our daily lives.

And, generally speaking, there is at least some reason for our suspicions, and there are some facts mixed in with the lies. How, then, can we discern the difference between falsehood and truth? How can we avoid being led astray, whether by the media or the internet, whether by politicians or preachers?

May error be exposed so dramatically in 2021 that blinders will fall off and there will be an awakening to reality. And may the tendencies within us that make us vulnerable to deception be revealed as well. May truth triumph in this new year.

Having said all this, I can immediately think of a long list of items that could have made it to my Top 5, which most likely are different from your Top 5. And I didn't even say a word about racial reconciliation or the like.

But I'll take these five for starters.

Any one of them coming to pass in 2021 would be amazing. All five would be a dream come true.

Do we have Your ear, Lord? {eoa}