

Michael Brown: What I Mean When I Speak of the Political Seduction of the Church

My newest book, "The Political Seduction of the Church: How Millions of American Christians Have Confused Politics with the Gospel," has just been released. But what, exactly, do I mean by "political seduction"?

Do I mean that Christians who are involved in politics have been seduced? Certainly not. I believe Christians *should* be involved in politics, as I have stated repeatedly for years.

Am I critiquing those who supported Donald Trump, as if they were seduced into voting for him? Not at all. I voted for him myself, both in 2016 and 2020. And my book is about the church more than it is about President Trump (or any other political leader, for that matter).

Then what do I mean by political seduction?

I'm referring to the unhealthy marriage of politics and the gospel. I'm speaking about the church becoming an appendage to a political party. I'm talking about God's people getting consumed with election fever. I'm referring to believers putting their hope in a political leader in a way that becomes unhealthy and even idolatrous.

That is what I mean by political seduction.

Unfortunately, seduction is very seducing. It comes in subtly, not overtly, through the side window, not the front door. And it looks so good at the outset, so justifiable, so right. It is only over time that it begins to show its fangs. (For a graphic picture of seduction and its consequences, read Proverbs 7.)

That's why I have a whole chapter in the book titled, "The Subtlety of Seduction."

That's also why I devote two chapters to the false prophecies about Trump's reelection in 2020, titled, "When the Prophets Prophesied Falsely," and, "The Genesis of False Prophecy."

That's why the last chapter of the book is titled, "How We Failed the Test: Retracing Our Steps and Learning the Big Lessons."

I am convinced that, as the people of God, we can do better. In fact, we *must* do better. Otherwise, without our light shining brightly, the nation will collapse.

But, to repeat, seduction is very subtle, and in the heat of the moment it's easy to understand why so many of us got so caught up in politics to the point of obsession.

After all, didn't the fate of the nation hang in the balance? Weren't our very freedoms at stake? Didn't the radical left want to bring dangerous, existential changes to our country, changes that would affect us for generations to come?

The answer to all these questions was and is yes—yes in 2020; yes in 2022; and yes in 2024. These have been and will be absolutely pivotal elections.

The problem is when we merge the gospel with the elections, as if a political party was the key to advancing God's kingdom on the earth. The problem is when we put our trust in the political system more than in the power of the gospel. The problem is when we try to fight spiritual battles with earthly weapons.

This is the political seduction of the church, and this is what happened to millions of us in recent years.

The question is: Did it happen to you? Did it happen to me?

Here are some telltale signs that we have been politically seduced:

When we're more concerned with winning elections than winning the lost.

When we wrap the gospel in the American flag.

When we equate our country with the kingdom of God.

When we confuse patriotism with spirituality.

When we compromise our ethics to keep our party (or man or woman) in power.

When our church/denomination/ministry becomes an appendage of a political party.

When we put more trust in earthly methods than in spiritual methods.

When we make one political party the party of God and the other the party of Satan.

When we become as vulgar and rude as the candidates we follow.

When we look to the White House more than to God's house.

When we make a human being into a political savior.

When we equate loyalty to God (which is unconditional) with loyalty to a party or political leader (which is conditional).

When our prayers and our prophecies become partisan.

These are all signs that we have been politically seduced, even if only one or two of them apply to us.

With all respect, I suggest that if the shoe fits, we wear it, own it, acknowledge it, learn from it and move forward without feeling condemned.

We need to take our place on the front lines, putting first things first—and that means the gospel before politics.

If we keep our priorities straight, the nation can be shaken.
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