

The Real Reason Why the Disaster in Afghanistan Unfolded as It Did

I feel heartsick about the tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan, particularly for the women and girls who are about to be subjected to the most brutal forms of Sharia (Islamic law). It is a travesty that should never have happened.

While many will be debating the logistical decisions made by the president and others that led to this catastrophe, I want to discuss the moral and theological decisions in America over the past 60 years that I believe have played a primary role in this disaster.

The tragedy in Afghanistan can be traced to America's secularization of its culture and armed forces. You cannot defeat ideas with bullets. Ideas must be defeated with better ideas. Sharia, to which the Taliban are fanatically committed, must be challenged with more than tanks and bullets

Early Christianity defeated the mighty Roman Empire without swords, chariots or spears. They defeated Rome with a message—the gospel message that Paul said is infused with power to change lives (Rom. 1:16).

Christian missionaries, sailors, businesspeople and soldiers alike shared the gospel message everywhere they went, and mighty Rome finally bowed its knee to the message of the cross of Christ. Ancient, pagan Rome was defeated by a message—the Christian message.

In a similar way, 245 years ago, a ragtag army of American colonists, lacking armaments and supplies, defeated the most powerful army on the planet and brought into existence a new nation. They were able to do this because of the transcendent

Christian ideals for which they fought. The historian William Novak has said,

[George] Washington knew his only hope lay in a profound conviction in the hearts and daily actions of all his men that what they did they did for God, and under God's protection (Hyatt, *1726: The Year that Defined America*, 114).

Washington, therefore, issued an order stating that each day was to begin with prayer led by the officers of each unit. He also ordered that, unless their duties required them to be elsewhere, every soldier was to observe "a punctual attendance of Divine services, to implore the blessing of heaven upon the means used for our safety and public defense." He also expressed his desire that "Every officer and man will endeavor so as to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier" (Hyatt, *1726: The Year that Defined America*, 114).

Those early Americans believed they were fighting a just war for the ideal of God-given liberty and that God would, therefore, fight for them. This internal belief in an ideal and cause bigger than themselves gave them the courage and fortitude to overcome tremendous obstacles and win the fight against a more powerful opponent.

Fast-forward to the 21st century. A secularized American army was sent to Afghanistan without a message for the Afghanistan people. The troops were given sensitivity training and told not to share their Christian faith with the people of Afghanistan including the troops whom they would be training.

Billions of dollars were spent, and thousands of lives sacrificed, to equip and train the Afghanistan people in the use of guns, tanks and planes. They did not, however, equip them with a message or ideal that would give them the internal fortitude and commitment to fight for the freedom of their people.

With no ideal higher than their own personal happiness, the

Afghanistan army wilted and ran when the U.S. pulled out its troops and the Taliban advanced. Their bullets were no match for the Taliban's devotion to an Islamic ideal, be it ever so wrong.

What if American military brass had allowed the troops who were Christian believers to share their faith with the Afghanistan people while going about their duties? What if they had allowed Christian social groups, such as Samaritan's Purse, to help the distressed Afghanistan people in the name of Jesus Christ?

I know my leftist friends will scream that this is colonialism. Not it isn't! It is freedom to share truth that will lift people and change their lives for the good.

I want the best for people, and so did George Washington, which is why he encouraged some Delaware chiefs, with whom he met after becoming president, to embrace "the religion of Jesus Christ." He said,

"You do well to wish to learn our arts and our ways of life and above all, the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are" (Hyatt, 1726: *The Year that Defined America*, 172).

Indeed, America's founding generation believed that it was Christian principles and morality that would lead to happiness for both the individual and the society. That is why Thomas Jefferson took money from the federal treasury to pay for a Christian missionary to the Kaskaskia Indian tribe and to build them a chapel in which to worship.

It is why John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence, wanted the entire earth to hear and embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. He expressed this in a Prayer Proclamation he issued while Governor of Massachusetts. In the 1793 Proclamation, he exhorted the people,

“That with true contrition of heart we may confess our sins, resolve to forsake them, and implore the Divine forgiveness through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST our Savior . . . and finally, to overrule all the commotion in the world, to the spreading of the true religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, in its purity and power, among all the people of the earth” (Hyatt, 1726: *The Year that Defined America*, 173).

The recent attempts to export American-style democracy to other nations, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, apart from any connection to Christian faith and morality have proven futile. America’s founders would say that such efforts are futile because true liberty cannot be had apart from Christian truth and morality.

It is time for all Americans to revisit our founding principles of faith and freedom. Otherwise, we will see even more tragic calamities unfold in the days ahead. {eo}

This article is derived from Dr. Eddie Hyatt’s book, 1726: The Year that Defined America, available from Amazon and his website at.e.

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