

The Right Man for the Job

Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from Stephen E. Strang's God, Trump and COVID-19, which is now available to purchase. [Click here to learn more.](#)

It's ironic and hypocritical that many on the Left have been so desperate to criticize President Donald Trump in his quest of making America great again. For example, in his handling of the COVID-19 crisis, the criticisms were wide and varied: Trump didn't close the borders soon enough; he closed them too soon. He didn't speak up enough; he spoke up too much. He took the advice of the wrong people; he didn't listen to enough people.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, liberals criticized President Trump for everything from his lifestyle—although before he ran for president as a Republican, they saw nothing wrong with his past and he seemed to be the darling of the liberal media—to his beliefs. Has he done and said things that don't reflect the teachings of the Bible? Yes. He's imperfect, but according to some, that makes him a great leader.

In the same way, some Christians overlook the good Trump has done and focus on all the mistakes he's made and the perceived weaknesses he still struggles with. The question we must ask ourselves, though, is, What is the fruit? Donald Trump has probably been one of the staunchest defenders of religious liberties and freedoms we have seen. He also makes it no secret that he has an evangelical council that meets with him periodically, ministers to him, advises him, and at times even lays hands on and prays over him.

"As Christians we have created artificial standards for our leaders that God doesn't have for His leaders in the Bible," historian David Barton told me for *God, Trump, and the 2020 Election*. "I have flaws, Trump has flaws, and we can point

them out in a self-righteous manner. Or we can look at Hebrews 11 and see that all these great leaders had serious flaws but God definitely still used them.”

Barton said conservative Christians should “look at what the president has done for the economy, but especially standing for religious liberty, appointing righteous judges, protecting unborn life, and supporting Israel—so many of the things the Bible specifically talks about. No president in our lifetime has gotten done as many biblically correct things as he has.”

Because of this, Barton said Christians must be willing to support Trump and not allow the Left to undermine his conservative agenda any longer. He points out that we don’t have to win every American to our way of thinking—we just need to win more than we have now.

Author Lance Wallnau has made the same point. “Figures like Churchill, Lincoln, and George S. Patton don’t step out of cathedrals onto the stage of history, yet we canonize them later as instruments God raised up to meet a singular crisis,” he said. None of these men were conventional Christians, and they had many detractors in the clergy, yet each played a pivotal role in history. They stood strong against the enemies of freedom and helped safeguard our way of life and Christian heritage.

History has shown that Winston Churchill was the right man at the right time to be used by God, yet he was also unpopular. In fact, Churchill was described with terms often used in association with Donald Trump. Critics called him an “aristocratic adventurer” who lacked good judgment and political skills.” He was considered “rootless ... unstable ... unsound ... an undeniable cad,” according to the biography *God and Churchill: How the Great Leader’s Sense of Divine Destiny Changed His Troubled World and Offers Hope for Ours* by Churchill’s great-grandson the late Jonathan Sandys and Wallace Henley. Churchill was “an embarrassment” to important

people in the Conservative Party. And he was viewed as impetuous- “‘a real danger’ who ... tended not to count the cost of his endeavors.”

The British didn't like him until they needed someone strong enough to defeat the Nazis. Churchill didn't have many fans within the Christian community, either. The conservative Christians of the day in Britain didn't like the fact that he smoked cigars and loved drinking brandy. Churchill was a deeply flawed man, but God still raised him up to save Western civilization.

Churchill seemed to know this. Sandys asserts that his famous great-grandfather felt a call from God his entire life that he was to save Western civilization. A case can be made, of course, that Churchill did just that when he stopped Hitler from taking over Great Britain. In the face of Hitler's military might, Churchill had to resolve to move ahead anyhow and to never quit. Churchill was a strong leader, and his example shows that God uses whomever He chooses.

That's what I see in Donald Trump and why people support him despite all the criticisms thrown at him. In that respect Trump resembles the indefatigable British prime minister, who often went against convention, decorum, and his own party to badger the people of Great Britain into defending their country against Hitler's Third Reich. Churchill was viciously attacked by the media in his day. Today, Donald Trump invites the same kinds of bitterness and resentment by raising alarms about the unraveling of American society at a time when our political elites, buttressed by the media, are denying that anything is wrong. Like Churchill, Trump is the target of opposition forces seeking to silence him for his bluntness and to stop him from speaking from the heart about problems the political establishment has been sweeping under the carpet for generations.

True leaders such as Churchill show strength of character in

the face of adversity. Granted, Britain was in a life-and-death struggle with Nazi Germany, which threatened to destroy all of civilization. Forgive me if this seems hyperbolic, but the situation today in America is almost as serious, considering the world we might have entered had Hillary Clinton won the election instead of Trump. It's a world where we could have lost our constitutional protections of our religious freedoms. In this case our struggle wasn't with guns, tanks, and planes; it was a political battle over the presidency and the direction of our nation now and for generations.

Although some people interpreted Donald Trump's win as a political revolution, many conservative Christians saw it as a cultural counter-revolution and an answer to prayer. Evangelist and media personality James Robison told me that in 2016 "a lot of Christians were praying that we wouldn't lose freedom, that we would not lose the opportunities this nation offers with the protections and safeguards, and government functioning as a protector, and not potentially replacing God and our love for one another."

Robison, who serves on the president's Faith Advisory Board and remains a friend and confidant of Trump's, believes now that Donald Trump represents a supernatural answer to prayer, but he didn't come in the package people wanted. Of the seventeen Republican nominees, he ranked as the last choice of most Evangelicals. "He would have been my last choice," Robison told me. "Many conservatives said that we don't know where Donald Trump is going to end up taking us, but we know exactly where Hillary Clinton would take us, and that would be a continuation of everything that's wrong, destructive, and that would ruin America by taking away our freedoms."

The secular pundits saw Trump's victory only as a battle between Democrat and Republican, or between the Left and the Right. But Robison saw it as a supernatural spiritual battle. "What happened," he told me, "is that God overpowered the

foolishness of political correctness and the liberal (not just deceived but possessed) Left, which is far too often dead set against a biblical worldview and against America's traditional Judeo-Christian ethics. But they were being totally pushed back."

The secular Left in this country, Robison said, are being manipulated by the powers Jesus was talking about when He said of those who crucified Him, "They don't know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34, NLT). They knew exactly what they were doing, but Jesus said no, they didn't. "They were under the control of another force, another power in the invisible supernatural realm of the Spirit. They were deceived by the deceiver," Robison told me.

Millions of Christians were praying for that deception to be overthrown to prevent the government from being raised up as another form of Pharaoh or some kind of overseeing Caesar. The people were praying, "God, we've got to let You be God. We've got to stop this nonsense." And Robison added, "Christians were praying for this to be stopped, but they never dreamed that it would be some person totally disconnected with politics, totally unable to even express himself like a politician, and someone who was best known as a shrewd maneuverer."

Trump spoke with conviction about what's wrong in this country, Robison told me. "He was totally open about everything that was wrong. Most of us would agree that he didn't address those problems in the most statesmanlike or diplomatic terms, but everything he was saying was right on track. He was saying that many things in this country are bad and they needed to be dealt with. And he was 100 percent correct."

Christians who were concerned about "government masquerading as God," to use Robison's expression, knew the government needed to be brought under control, so Trump's win served as

evidence that their prayers were being answered.

“He understood what it means to lay a foundation,” Robison said. “He is a builder. What he didn’t realize was that he was actually returning to the foundation of our freedom, and we know that the solid rock upon which we are to build is the transforming truth Jesus referred to when He said, ‘You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’” (John 8:32, NKJV).

Along with many other evangelical leaders, Robison initially backed Ted Cruz. But he also knew several other presidential contenders, including Rand Paul, Carly Fiorina, and his lifelong friend Rick Perry. He has prayed with all of them. “They all looked like they had such great qualifications,” he said, “and frankly I was astounded that Donald Trump was even being considered and gaining momentum.”

After dropping out of the race, Mike Huckabee was the first to tell Robison to get behind Trump. Robison had been recruiting Huckabee to counsel Cruz, but the governor told him, “James, the man who listens to counsel the best of anybody I’ve been around is Donald Trump.”

Surprised to hear that, Robison said, “Mike, have you lost your mind?”

“No, I haven’t. I’ve known him, James. I’ve watched him, and I know it sounds crazy, but I believe he’s the right man at this time,” Huckabee replied. Robison remembers hearing Jerry Falwell Jr. saying much the same thing.

After Ben Carson dropped out of the race, Robison prayed with him nearly every day on the phone. “The week that Dr. Carson decided to endorse Trump, we probably talked on average about two hours a day,” Robison told me. “Then all of a sudden he told me, ‘I’m endorsing Donald Trump.’ And I said, ‘Ben, you’ve lost your mind! What are you doing?’ He said, ‘James, listen to me. I’ve spent two hours with him this week and two hours

another day. It's just not the way it looks.' So I asked him, 'What do you mean?' And Ben Carson told me, 'James, I'm telling you, he'll listen to wisdom. And my endorsement comes with the assurance that he will be willing to listen to those who have deep convictions and the ability to communicate their importance, and he agreed to do that.'"

Apparently Trump did listen. Before long Robison was flying with him to campaign events, giving him advice, and offering spiritual counsel whenever possible. Robison said he has met with several presidents. "None of them were as open as Donald Trump," he told me. "Mr. Trump called frequently on his cell phone, and he took my calls. We were able to have very open, honest exchanges where I could share the real concerns of pro-family, pro-faith leaders. He was always very appreciative and responsive. I was also able to travel with him on the plane and ride with him in the car in very important moments when I shared serious, deep concerns we had, which many thought Donald Trump would not listen to or even consider. But not only did he hear me with graciousness; he was very expressive in his appreciation for me and love for my family."

In an interview for The Stream, Robison asked Jack Graham, pastor of the nearly forty-five-thousand-member Prestonwood Baptist Church based in Plano, Texas, how he assessed the president's attitude toward people of faith. Robison said, "You've seen him in settings where someone is sharing their concern ... Do you find it amazing the way this president responds to people no matter who they are?"

Graham answered, "Beyond just personal skills, I am convinced he has a genuine spiritual interest and a desire to hear the viewpoint of others. In particular, it's apparent he wants to know what conservative, Bible-believing Christians think. It's been very gratifying and satisfying. And not only him but the people he has put into place. Vice President [Mike] Pence is a great Christian. Eight or nine of his Cabinet members, the people closest to him, are Christians, and they are having

Bible study and prayer together.”

Graham also said, “I am grateful this president has given us the opportunity to speak into his life. When we prayed for him in the Oval Office earlier this week, though he was under a great deal of pressure, he was buoyant and joyful. We stayed in there for a good while conversing and praying. It was a God moment and a powerful experience.” Robison and Graham agreed that Trump’s words and actions indicate that this president values the opinions of the Christian leaders.

Not only did the sudden groundswell of support for Trump occur at Trump’s political rallies, but you could see it in churches, in prayer groups, and at rallies of all sorts. Cindy Jacobs, cofounder of Generals International and the Reformation Prayer Network, is not well known in evangelical circles but is widely respected by Charismatics as a prophet and teacher. She mobilized ten thousand intercessors to “prayer-walk” the seven critical states that helped Trump win in November 2016. These men and women walked around courthouses or the centers of towns praying for righteousness to prevail. In addition, a coalition of prayer leaders called As One also mobilized its networks two different times to prayer-walk for forty days.

Jacobs has ministered all over the world, and as the campaign grew more intense in the fall of 2016, she began receiving calls from friends in Europe, China, and Latin America saying intercessors were praying fervently that Trump would be elected. Many took the election so seriously they told her they were fasting and praying for hours each day. Jacobs’ close friend Lou Engle, a revivalist and cofounder of TheCall, a group that hosted twelve-hour prayer rallies, urged supporters to begin a three-day fast as a petition for God’s mercy. He rallied thousands to join him because things looked so bleak. Conservative Christians believed that if Hillary Clinton won this election, it would be “game over” for religious freedom.

The night before the election, Jerry Johnson, then president of National Religious Broadcasters, attended a prayer meeting in Washington, DC, and came away telling friends he believed Trump would win. I had been praying too, and I felt a similar optimism. That's why I accepted an invitation from Darrell Scott, pastor of the New Spirit Revival Center in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, to fly to New York to watch the election returns at the New York Hilton on election night. Scott was joined by several other African American pastors. That event, with the whole world watching, turned out to be a huge victory celebration. For part of the evening I stood near Pastor Robert Jeffress of First Baptist Church in Dallas. He told me what a miracle he thought it would be if Trump actually won.

For most of the evening, the television commentators kept predicting that Clinton would be victorious. Even Fox News, which was broadcast live on TV screens in the Hilton ballroom, was reporting that Clinton had the edge and Trump had too much ground to make up. Yet by 10:00 p.m. Eastern time it seemed to me that Trump's lead in electoral votes would be enough so that even a surge of West Coast victories couldn't make up the difference.

The networks were showing all of the jubilation from the Hilton ballroom. It was packed with people who had worked diligently for the campaign. Then, when Trump's numbers hit the 270 mark, the liberal commentators were stunned into silence by the realization that Trump had actually won.

Where I was standing in the Hilton ballroom, my Christian friends were shouting, and a few shed tears of joy. It was as if God had answered our prayers and the impossible had happened. We had a new president, one we believed God had raised up for such a time as this. And perhaps best of all, we each thanked God in our own way that Hillary Clinton was not going to be the next commander in chief.

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