

This Is How Christians Should Engage the Culture

Gary Miller, my friend for more than 30 years, writes a devotional column that consistently strikes gold. Here's a clip from one of Gary's latest:

Christians don't influence politicians by preaching sermons, signing petitions or going to church. They make their presence known and their voices heard by registering to vote and by casting ballots.

There is a huge difference between symbolism and substance. Politicians pay lip service to the former, but they pay attention to the latter. All that glitters isn't gold, and silence isn't always golden. Sometimes it is just plain yellow. Perceived as cowards, Christians are seldom feared as a constituency.

Perception is the cruelest form of truth. The truth is that this perception of Christians will not change until their leaders stop tweeting and sermonizing about issues and start mobilizing their people to vote with biblical values.

Politicians do not fear the turn of a phrase in a snarky tweet or the gathering of empty suits at a leadership summit. They fear voter turnout.

Mobilizing pastors to inform and to inspire their people to register to vote and to enter the voting booth to express their biblical convictions is not complicated. It is just hard. Mobilization is consistent with the Scriptural admonition for Christians to be salt and light in a tasteless and sightless world.

The voting booth and the prayer closet have one thing in common: silence. Politicians listen to the faintest whisper

of the voting booth. God inclines His ear to hear the cries of His children rising up to Him from their prayer closets.

The truths that Gary has exposed here must be driven deep into the soil of the American church. Somebody's values are going to reign supreme.

Congregations of America must relearn and reestablish the doctrinal truth that God did not promise, as A.W. Pink noted in *An Exposition of Hebrews*, "His people a smooth path through this world; instead, He has ordained that 'we must go through much tribulation' to enter His kingdom' (Acts 14:22)."

It is not the newly installed pastor but the scarred veterans who are being assigned to positions on the front ranks in the battle for the soul of America.

Dr. Bruce K. Waltke reinforced this truth in his *Commentary on Genesis* (a 2002 Christian Book of the Year): "The serpent's final defeat under Messiah's heel (Gen. 3:15) is delayed to effect God's program of redemption through the promised offspring. In the interim, God leaves Satan to test the fidelity of each succeeding generation of the covenant people (Judg. 2:22) and teach them to fight against untruth (Judg. 3:2)."

Christians must return America to the biblical model established by America's Founding Fathers if we are to experience sustainable freedom. How close we came to secularism's precipice on Nov. 8; we received mercy.

Num. 17 presents the way forward: "The rod of Aaron, for the house of Levi, had sprouted. It brought forth buds, produced blossoms, and yielded almonds" (v. 8b). The lifeless rod being made to blossom speaks of the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. A God who can say, "Come forth" to Lazarus, who was dead three days in the grave, can also say to revival in America, "Come forth."

The sweet psalmist of Israel rested in faith, recognizing that prayer is useless unless God hears and answers prayer. Prayer is an intensely practical thing, it must be reestablished in the churches of America if the United States is to experience a spiritual resurrection.

I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I will be saved from my enemies. The cords of death encircled me, and the torrents of destruction terrified me. ... In my distress I called on the Lord, and cried for help to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry for help came before Him to His ears. Then the earth shook and quaked; the foundations of the hills also moved; they reeled because His anger burned (Ps. 18:3-4; 6-7).

As Pink noted in his *The Life of David*, "David recalls pathetically the past experiences when, like an animal caught in the nets, those who hunted him so relentlessly were ready to close in upon and seize their prey. 'In his distress,' he says, 'I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God' (v. 4). Though it was but the call of one weak solitary voice, unheard on earth, it reached heaven, and the answer shook all creation: 'He heard my voice out of His temple . . . Then the earth shook and trembled' (vs. 6, 7). One saint in his extremity put in motion the mighty powers of omnipotence: overwhelming is the contrast between cause and effect. Wonderful as the greatness, equally marvelous is the swiftness of the answer: 'Then the earth shook.'"

Gideons and Rahabs are beginning to stand. {eoa}