

Where Are Our Gideons?

A Gideon appeared on the national stage last week, in the form of Dan Forest, Lt. Governor of North Carolina. The NBA decided to pull its 2017 All-Star Game out of the city of Charlotte, due to the recent “bathroom wars” fought in the state. In response, Lt. Gov. Forest wrote:

“What is happening here is so much bigger than a basketball game. A sovereign state is being blackmailed by a private business (NBA) who is being threatened by a national LGBT lobbying effort, all to force North Carolina to open female restrooms, showers and locker rooms up to men. All of this was done under the guise of “inclusiveness” and other politically correct buzzwords. But the reality is that had we not blocked the Charlotte Bathroom Ordinance from going into effect, sex offenders and pedophiles would have had full access to our women and children in bathrooms around the state. I enjoy the NBA and wanted them to hold the All-Star game in Charlotte but if that game comes with strings attached, strings that would expose women and children to danger, molestation, assault and voyeurism, then no thank you. Take your business elsewhere, and I have no apologies about saying that and never will. The NBA knows the economic hit North Carolina will take from this decision. I wish the NBA would likewise acknowledge the pain, sorrow and devastation a child or woman feels when they are exploited. We will never value a dollar over a woman’s or child’s safety and security.”

Even as we commend Lt. Gov. Forest, we are compelled to ask: Where in the world are other elected officials who are willing to take such a stand?

American Christianity has grown old and feeble, no longer the muscular force imported to America by the Founders. Sifted by persecution, our forefather’s hands were “trained for war” (Ps. 144:1):

“That He might send choice grain over into the wilderness; and the blood and persecution of martyrs became the seed of both the church and the state.

“It was in these schools of fiery trial that the founders of the American republic were educated and prepared for their grand Christian mission, and in which their faith and characters became strong and earnest with Christian truth. They were trained in stormy times, in order to prepare them to elaborate and establish the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty and of just systems of civil government.”

As B.F. Morris said in *The Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States* (1864):

“During the Revolution, the States assumed their separate sovereignties and formed State constitutions. These civil charters, as this work will show, were full and explicit in their incorporation of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and their constitutions prohibited men from holding office who did not publicly assent to their faith in the being of a God, the divinity of the Bible, and in the distinctive evangelical truths Christianity.”

Our ancestors refused to retreat from confrontation in the public square. They recognized that turning over the making, enforcement, and adjudication of laws to nonbelievers would contribute to “widespread, systemic, violations of law” leading to anarchy; a consequence of the disinclination of the Church to engage the culture in the public square.

Archie P. Jones, describing America’s Founders, wrote: “They did not surrender the ministry of civil government to those who are in rebellion against God. They knew that our nation’s civil government and law must be based upon God’s law and principles of justice if we are to enjoy His blessings upon our land and people.”

Jesus Christ resurrects, transforms, and produces men and women of character, equipping and enabling them to rule and “decree justice” (Prov. 8:15). Virtuous men and women produce a righteous body politic and nation. In God’s never-ending order the glory of a nation lies in its righteousness, not in its Gross Domestic Product or military might. America’s Founders, possessing Biblical wisdom and driven by virtue and righteousness, birthed America’s Christian culture.

But twenty-first century Christianity seems to have arrived at a place where Believers lack the resolution to stand up to the false god of Secularism and its disciples. Stephen Charnock, seventeenth-century clergyman and theologian, wrote: “A soldier unresolved to fight may easily be defeated. Resolution in a weak man will perform more than strength in a coward. The diligence of our spiritual enemies, require strong resolutions.”

Virtue and liberty are inseparable, liberty and freedom cannot long be preserved in the absence of virtue within its people and their representatives.

And how did the Founders encourage virtue? Well, government promoted Christianity; morality was seen as the anchor of sustainable freedom. You doubt this? Study the words of the Northwest Ordinance (1787): “Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”

So, what do we do?

Prayer must be reestablished in America’s churches. True prayer begins at the place of anguish.

Once prayer is resumed in America’s churches, then we’ll need more Gideons and Rahabs, like North Carolina Lt. Governor Dan Forest, to take a stand.