

Why Americans Are Turning on Each Other After San Bernardino

Of all the horrific shootings this country has suffered these past few years, the tragedy at San Bernardino may have been the most significant. Not because it took more lives than others, or even because of the gunmen's potential motives.

No, Wednesday's tragedy was more stunning because it prompted an even fiercer attack—on faith. Instead of turning to one another for strength in crisis, Americans turned *on* each other.

Led by a rabid media, the headlines were no longer about the victims and their grieving families—but about leaders who dared to do what the frightened people inside the killing ground asked: *pray*. Splashed with contempt across the front cover of the *New York Daily News* were the messages of several Republicans, whose natural reaction to tragedy was to turn where men since the first Continental Congress had.

To God.

"Our prayers are with the victims, their families, and the first responders in San Bernardino," Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) had tweeted. "Please keep the victims of #SanBernardino in your prayers," Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) urged.

In bold text, the *News's* cover screamed back, "GOD ISN'T FIXING THIS." It was a startling response—one that exploded through the darkest corners of Twitter "progressivism," until even a Connecticut senator, before anyone had an inkling of what had happened or why, lashed out with: "Your 'thoughts' should be about steps to take to stop this carnage. Your 'prayers' should be for forgiveness if you do nothing—again."

Later, his office tried to clarify, but it was too late. Angry liberals had already made their point: This is no longer the America of 1774. Or even 2001. It's a new era of openly demonizing anyone with deep and sincere faith.

"As latest batch of innocent Americans are left lying in pools of blood," the *News* scoffed, "cowards who could truly end gun scourge continue to hide behind meaningless platitudes." Meaningless platitudes? Like the ones enshrined in our Constitution—or inscribed on our coins? How far we've fallen.

Hours after a Muslim couple mowed down dozens of people in a quiet county office, the story isn't that they may have been radicalized in Saudi Arabia or had enough explosives to blow up a neighborhood block, but that the American people had the audacity to get on their knees and pray.

"At one time in American history," *The Atlantic's* Emma Green wrote wistfully, "liberals and conservatives shared a language of God, but that's clearly no longer the case; any invocation of faith is taken as implicit advocacy of right-wing political beliefs."

The one constant in crisis—from Pearl Harbor to 9/11—was "In God We Trust."

Now, the same party that voted God out of its platform is so hostile to Christians under President Obama that it begs the question: Is this culture of enmity so strong that it's actually motivating acts like this?

Despite what liberals would have you believe: hate is what drives men to slaughter innocent people—not guns. And the government can't make us safer until it recognizes that the problem isn't the instruments of violence, but the *environment* of it. If the White House truly wanted to end the animosity dividing us, it would stop inflaming it through policies that punish religion and fast-track moral decline. It isn't that God can't fix this—it's that cynics like the ones

at *New York Daily News* won't let Him.

In her column about the Left's response to the shooting, *The Federalist's* Mollie Hemmingway hit the nail on the head. Liberals are only diminishing the Christian faith so that they can exercise their own religion: big government. "Progressives] explain that the god of good government would have been able to take care of us if only we'd given it sufficient power to do so. In this case, that power is gun control," she points out.

"Progressives tend to believe that government—if made to have sufficient size, scope, and proper management over the affairs of man—will fix or at least seriously mitigate the problem of evil in the world. They tend to believe that man can be perfected, and perfected through government action. These almost cartoonish denunciations of prayer we saw yesterday, combined with the implicit praises of government action, are best understood as a sort of primitive religious reaction to the problem that growth of the state still hasn't fixed the problem of evil in the world."

While these forces tug at the fraying fabric of America, our prayers are more important than ever. And we will continue offering them—for our leaders, for the victims, and for our nation—without apology.