

Why Evangelicals Must Start 'Playing Chess Instead of Checkers' in the Political Realm

President Joe Biden delivered a prime-time speech last Thursday on what the White House outlined as the "battle for the soul of the nation."

While the November 8, 2022, mid-term elections are only about two months away, the president neither said a word about the abandonment of the Afghan people who staked their lives for the U.S., nor about his extremely far-left socialist policies or that inflation is at its highest level in 40 years.

White House strategists moreover have decided to keep the lid on both the border tragedy and the disheartening return to energy dependence on OPEC. And lastly, not a single word of the woke ideological war the Biden Administration has declared on parents.

President Biden struck the keynote in his opening, "Too much of what's happening in our country today is not normal. Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans represent an extremism that threatens the very foundations of our republic." His address was intended to focus the fall elections on the intricacies of Donald Trump and to make him the face of Republicans running this fall.

We have seen this underhanded design before.

Democrats want a repeat of January 2021, when they won the two Georgia senate runoff seats as they re-litigated the 2020 presidential election. The former president's lack of discipline, plus his refusal to stay off Twitter and stay

home, unseen, at Mar-a-Largo cost Republicans both of the Georgia senate seats and Republican control of the Senate.

Trump's poor judgment helped the entire news apparatus to keep the focus on him, and thus keeping it away from the nefarious and radical agenda of Rev. Raphael Warnock, who subsequently got elected and now serves as the junior U.S. Senator from Georgia.

However, who could blame the former president? Being spied upon with impunity by the Obama Administration in 2016, being investigated for close to two years for purported Russian collusion and conspiracy and then being impeached out of spite shows all the hallmarks of "deep state" machination.

But who can argue against "deep state" corruption if last month's raid on Mar-a-Largo turns out to have been part of a setup to place Trump front and center in the 2022 fall election. Shrewdly putting forward the notion that Trump will be the 2024 Republican presidential nominee is based on the belief of him being the only Republican they can beat in 2024.

President Trump was at his best when he was fighting for the American people. Evangelicals hung with him through thick and thin during his presidency because they viewed him "as a bulwark against a culture that they feel is increasingly hostile to them." The former president, on the other hand, was at his worst when he got involved in self-centered squabbles, and let his big ego get the better of him.

In Proverbs 27:1-2, Solomon provides advice for those with ego issues: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger and not your own lips."

Dr. Bruce K. Waltke, the 92-yr-old foremost living authority on Old Testament wisdom literature, puts further words to it: "God has the final word and no human counsel can thwart it. The wise live day by day, trusting the outcome to God and

being grateful to God for whatever He grants.

“It can be inferred that self-praise is unfitting because it destroys one’s relationship with God and with people. The Lord detests the proud, and society dislikes and discounts the boaster. Instead of exalting the boaster, self-praise diminishes one’s status and suggests that one is proud, feels undervalued and is socially insecure.”

Unable to restrain himself after President Biden’s instigations on Thursday night, Trump called the speech “awkward and angry,” adding that the current president “must be insane or suffering from late stage dementia.” Rash reactions like this no doubt will play in the hands of Democrat strategists and their fall election campaign strategy of keeping Trump in the negative forefront of the news.

As for Evangelicals, much was made from January 2017 through 2021 of the White House Evangelical Faith Group, who appeared to have little role in Trump’s historic 2016 win. In 2018, a few of the Faith Group’s leaders were in Riyadh meeting with Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman merely five days before the November election. It goes without saying that their time would have been used better by fully focusing on the then hotly contested congressional districts and key Senate states.

Regrettably, on Election Day, 2020, the “New York Times’” exit polling demonstrated that President Trump’s margin of the Evangelical vote dwindled from 81% support in 2016 to 76% in 2020. A 5% decrease in margin is the difference between winning and losing campaigns.

President Biden is conclusive evidence that elections have consequences, and that Evangelicals are playing checkers while the game is chess.

Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli [1469-1527], Italian Renaissance political philosopher, diplomat and author whose

most famous work, *The Prince* [Il Principe], brought him a reputation as an atheist and immoral cynic, sums up the Biden presidency to this point: “Political misjudgments and wrong turns are like tuberculosis, hard to detect and easy to cure in the beginning and easy to diagnose and very hard to cure at the end.”

Remembering President Biden’s soothing comfort to the American people on Election Night, November 3, 2020, promising to put “the harsh rhetoric of the campaign behind us, to lower the temperature, to see each other again, to listen to one another, to hear each other again and respect and care for one another, to unite, to heal, to come together as a nation and stop treating our opponents as enemies,” turns out to be sanctimonious platitudes, for he has done exactly the opposite.

Ending his address last Thursday President Biden said, “We can’t afford to have ... leave anyone on the sidelines. We need everyone to do their part. So speak up. Speak out.” Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. [1842-1935], an American jurist and legal scholar who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1902 to 1932 provides perspective: “Even a dog distinguishes between being stumbled over and being kicked.”

What President Biden considers the “soul of the nation” might well represent what is known as “the dark night of the soul,” a period of ignorance and spiritual crisis. Yet, out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls for, as it says in 2 Corinthians 4:8-10 [ESV]: “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.”

Gideon’s and Rahab’s are beginning to stand. {eoas}

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