

Why Would Anyone Be Mad About Praying for the President?

A few days ago, I took part in something that was deemed unacceptable and shameful.

I felt I was acting in good faith, and was on a sound biblical foundation. I had done the same thing many times in the past without incident and thought this would be no different. Boy, was I wrong.

According to some astonishing social media threads, my well-meaning gesture had now recast me, someone who, for all my life, has lived and loved with a wonderful eclectic group in our southern gumbo culture, as a hater.

My transgression?

I publicly prayed for the president.

Franklin Graham, Jentzen Franklin, Alveda King, Jack Graham, Paula White, Steve Strang and a diverse group of over 250 Christian and Jewish leaders joined an invitation for America's churches to pray. I was proud to participate. And it's in the Bible, too!

I slowly became aware of my new inferior life station after a few unfortunate moments perusing the comments of the prayer invitation on Franklin's social media timeline. The heartbreaking flow of comments were more discouraging than amusing.

In our free land, except for "fire" in a crowded theater, it is OK to say what you want. It's one of the great blessings of liberty that exist nowhere else on earth. That didn't surprise me.

But some of the meanest, hate filled rants came for the home

team.

Unhinged preacher types and their cheerleaders were verklempt; the spew was fierce, and the angry epithets were flying, in Jesus' name.

In one response to the invitation, a dear brother lovingly sent word to the President, "I pray you and Franklin Graham get to be cellmates in hell."

I'll take that as a "no."

Even after the prayer time, although it was not political, some in the disapproving Pharisaical throng were still banging the drum, forcing more than one preacher to write his flock explaining why he dared to pray for the President of the United States.

Guess we should always be watchful over the sensitive.

Traditionally, it's been easy to guess the political affiliation of a church body, and historically, for the most part, folks on all sides have given grace and space.

In this, when we knew there might be a natural disagreement, we understood first, we were grafted into the same supernatural family tree, and we acted accordingly. Yes, the uniqueness was fun, the fellowship was real.

But of late, I've witnessed the shaming, and I've noticed how the hostile divides of the outside have seamlessly seeped inside of the church house. It's just better dressed.

Lean in a bit, and you'll hear strains of a disapproving gospel attempting to infiltrate and intimidate people of faith, even in the pews. Think our way. Say our words. Or get assigned to a cell in hell.

And now, playing into this hair-trigger world, some have blended their personal biases, jealousies and anger into

another gospel.

As compromised conduits against our God-given freedoms, they seem more agitated against the people of the Word who don't agree with them rather than those who pose the real demonic threats to our country and the Body of Christ.

Much of the chest beating smokescreens are meant to mask the rage against our Judeo-Christian foundation, mingled with a hate frenzy towards America. And now, those who speak these things are assigned hero status. Even in some churches.

This has led to the partnering with groups and causes that are polar opposite to their professed Holy Ghost values. The real tragedy is the damage done to innocent sheep, who, although well-meaning, are cluelessly pulled in.

Because of their own disappointments, and as result of nonstop conditioning, even those who know better have seamlessly joined the twisting of evil to look like something beautiful.

Even in the abortion debates, we're seeing the same "Christians willing to pile on" tactics.

I heard some cheer the abortionist who described killing as a "woman's right," ignoring the "unfortunate casualties" by using buzzwords like kindness and compassion. One former First Daughter even referred to abortion as "Christian."

It is sad when Christian terms are used to validate the hijacking of life.

But, to be honest, I've also winced as I've watched those marching for the babies morph into a full scream mode while in the face of a young pregnant girl.

I agree with the urgency of the call, I fully support it, but I'm not sure it is the welcome a confused, frightened young lady needs at that overwhelming moment.

In my heart I hear the words, "The goodness of God leads to repentance."

Perhaps some of that Holy Spirit goodness, kindness and gentleness might be more effective. On all sides.

Intimidating bombast has no place in God's House.

Whether it's from the pulpit, the movie star or just the gang down at the beauty parlor, if you are shamed or pronounced a hater, a bigot, and certainly not a real Christian simply because you're brave enough to pray for the president, you might want to strap on a pair of track shoes and run from there as fast as you can.

"Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man you will not go, lest you learn his ways and get a snare to your soul," Proverbs 22:24-25.

Michael Green is pastor with his wife, Linda, at The LifeGate () in Metairie and Mandeville, Louisiana. He is also a speaker, singer, producer and writer. Find him on Twitter (@MichaelGreen77).