

Did Assassination Attempt Solidify Trump's Anointing to Serve?

President Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) survived an assassination attempt in March 1981, just 69 days into his first term. The would-be assassin, John Hinckley Jr., got off six shots in 1.7 seconds, nearly taking the life of the president and changing the trajectory of history.

Just 44 days later, Pope John Paul II (1920-2005) was gravely wounded in another assassination attempt. The assault profoundly deepened the pope's commitment to his Lord and devotion to the church. In the spirit of Christian love and forgiveness, 2 1/2 years after the assassination attempt, the pope visited his assailant.

It is unknown if it was Pope John's unselfish gesture and true forgiveness, since love "keeps no record of wrongs" (1 Cor. 13:5b, NIV), but in 2007, the Pope's Turkish assailant, Mehmet Ali Ağca, "decided to renounce the Muslim faith and become a member of the Roman Catholic Church."

Ronald Reagan required eight pints of blood during surgery, and Pope John Paul would need six pints to survive. Both believed they had been spared for a purpose, which President Reagan described as God's "DP," divine plan.

In Scripture, a mantle is a cape worn to ward off the cold. In the spiritual sense, the mantle represents a man's anointing, a calling to fulfill God's purposes. Reagan's and John Paul's mantles provided an ultimate change in their personal lives and in world history, resulting in the bringing down of godless communism.

A.W. Pink notes in "An Exposition of Hebrews" that it is not

the raw recruit but the scarred veteran who is assigned a place in the front ranks of the battle. For those who have come so close to death, the devil's pageantry no longer beckons. The day following the assassination attempt, Reagan recorded in his diary, "Whatever happens now, I owe my life to God and will try to serve him in every way I can."

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According to calendar makers, the 20th century began on January 1, 1901, and ended one hundred years later. But a historical case can be made that it started on June 28, 1914, when Gavrilo Princip murdered Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and ended on December 25, 1991, when the hammer and sickle flag of the Soviet Union was lowered from the Kremlin for the last time.

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Paul Kengor argues that the extraordinary untold story of the 20th century was the heroic collaboration between a pope and a president, which brought about the death of Soviet communism. Both came perilously close to death, and both believed that they had been saved by divine providence so that they could accomplish a sacred mission—the defeat of atheistic communism.

The rise of godless communism marred the 20th century, triggered by Archduke Ferdinand's assassination by 19-year old Bosnian-Serb Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. This led to WWI and a century of bloodshed and slaughter.

Communism's rapid demise was initiated by three world leaders of biblical faith: Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Pope John Paul II.

This brings us to Donald J. Trump's Republican National Convention speech on Thursday, July 18, during which he said, "I'm not supposed to be here tonight. I stand before you in this arena by the grace of Almighty God. And watching the reports over the last few days, many people say it was a providential moment."

Former President Trump likely received his mantle and anointing in Butler, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, July 13, in the assassination attempt on his life by 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks.

The former president's No. 1 critic, Karl Rove, noticed a different Trump. In The Wall Street Journal, he wrote, "On Monday night, Mr. Trump silently entered the RNC, his face unusually emotional, even subdued. The gravity of being targeted for assassination clearly affected him. There are reports he's feeling enormous gratitude for being alive." [Trump expressed that in his convention speech]

A biblically illiterate culture cannot recognize that God has enemies. The prophet Amos brings us to the crux of the problem: "Can two walk together unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3, NKJV).

While the early American Founding Fathers may not have agreed on everything, they did establish Scripture as foundational for discernment and understanding.

As to secular America, religious secularism has determined over the last 50 years that a 5-4 majority vote by the U.S. Supreme Court equals the truth:

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- The ban of Bible reading in public schools by 8-1 vote in *Abington v Schempp*, 1993.
- The slaughter of pre- and post-born babies by a 7-2 vote in *Roe v. Wade*, 1973.
- The removal of the Ten Commandments from public schools, courthouses and government buildings by a 5-4 vote in *Stone v. Graham*, 1980.
- The consecration of sodomy by a 6-3 vote in *Lawrence v. Texas*, 2003.
- The commendation and celebration of same-sex marriage by a 5-4 vote in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 2015.
- The pronouncement of “special rights” for homosexuals and transgenders by a 6-3 vote in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, 2020.

Franklin Graham was asked to say a few words and pray at the RNC in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He said:

Last Saturday in Butler, Pennsylvania, President Trump had a near-death experience. No question, but God spared his life.

When we go through those experiences, they change us. They can cause us to examine our lives and reevaluate our priorities. I cannot explain why God would save one life and allow another to be taken; I don't have the answer to that. But one thing I do know is that God loves us, and he wants us to be with him in heaven one day.

And that's through faith in his Son Jesus Christ. The Bible says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

As long as I've known President Trump, I have found him to be

a man of his word. Things that he said he'll do, he did. In 2016, he said he would appoint conservative justices. Guess what? He did. [Also] In 2016, he said he would defend religious liberty, so guess what? He did.

When American citizen and Pastor Andrew Brunson was being held in a Turkish jail on false accusations, President Trump demanded that he be released, and [the president] applied economic pressure and sanctions until they did that.

It's an honor to be asked to pray for Donald Trump this evening, and that's what I'd like to do.

Gideons and Rahabs are beginning to stand.

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David Lane is the founder of the American Renewal Project.