

It's Time for American Christendom to Go on the Offense

Friedrich Gustav Emil Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) was a German theologian and Lutheran pastor who served from 1931 to 1937 at Saint Anne's Lutheran Church in Dahlem, a wealthy suburb of Berlin.

Believing as a young man that Germany needed a strong leader to promote national unity and honor, Niemöller thought that could be achieved by Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist Party, touting nationalist slogans and advocating autonomy for private worship of the Christian faith. Niemöller voted for the Nazis, both in the 1924 Prussian state elections and in the final national parliamentary elections of March 1933

Most Germans hailed Adolf Hitler's appointment as German chancellor on Jan. 30, 1933, but few were more jubilant than Protestant church leaders, who welcomed the possibility of national regeneration. Yet, following Hitler's rise to power and Nazism's interference in church governance, Pastor Niemöller became a disillusioned and outspoken critic.

Niemöller had come to the ministry late in life, at nearly 40 years of age. A gifted charismatic preacher, he soon became widely known for his critical sermons against the state and the view that neopaganism was being encouraged by the Nazis.

As a consequence, Pastor Niemöller was frequently arrested between 1934 and 1937. In February 1938, he was sent off and held in solitary confinement in Sachsenhausen concentration camp. In 1941, the Gestapo transferred the pastor to Dachau. The last eight years of Nazi rule, Niemöller toiled in Nazi prisons and concentration camps.

Martin Niemöller was a complex man and a self-confessed anti-Semite, in contrast to modern evangelicals, who are viewed as Israel's best friends due to the Abrahamic Covenant, which came about when God said to Abraham, "I will bless those that bless you and curse those who curse you, and I'm giving you the land."

As an aside, I went in 2013 with my friend Ralph Hallow (1938-2020), the celebrated chief political correspondent for The Washington Times, to his scheduled interview with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. When asked in the foyer outside Abbas' office, "Why do the evangelicals back the Jews over the Palestinians?"

I answered by paraphrasing Genesis 12:1-3;7: "God said to Abraham, 'I will bless those that bless you and curse those who curse you, and I'm giving you the land.'" The official responded, "So you're saying that I'm not a son of Abraham?" I replied, "You are a son of Abraham, and you came through Ishmael."

All hell broke loose.

Ralph and I were thrown out of PLO Headquarters in Ramallah for articulating the very last truth that God spoke to Moses in Deuteronomy 34:4: "This is the land that I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your offspring.'"

Niemöller's unscripted remark from his 8-year period of captivity is what he's best known for today. He said: "First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me."

Pastor Niemöller's colleague, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945),

didn't fare too well either. A Lutheran pastor, theologian and anti-Nazi dissident, Pastor Bonhoeffer's theology would not lead him away from the German public square, but instead deeply and profoundly into it.

In witnessing the atrocities of the Nazi regime and the unspeakable human suffering, Bonhoeffer became involved in a plot to assassinate Hitler. Imprisoned for the last two years of his life, Pastor Bonhoeffer was executed at dawn on the morning of April 8, 1945, having been led naked into the execution yard while prison guards jeered and ridiculed him.

At the foot of the scaffold, Bonhoeffer paused to kneel and pray, then got up and climbed the steps to the gallows. Using a meat hook from a slaughterhouse, Bonhoeffer was then slowly hoisted by a noose formed of piano wire. Asphyxiation is thought to have taken half an hour ... one of the last gruesome acts of Adolf Hitler.

The SS camp doctor who witnessed Bonhoeffer's death later recalled a man "devout, brave and composed; I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God."

Pastor Martin Niemöller came to the realization that compliance and doing nothing, as expressed in his "they came for," is that which led Germany to Adolf Hitler, a despot "who consorted with crazies and criminals and was often seen carrying a dog whip in public." Niemöller's adage is especially prescient and current as America drifts idly towards the abyss, having surrendered the culture to religious secularism over the last 100 years or so.

Last week, Canadian Pastor Derek Reimer was arrested by Calgary police over his protest at a drag queen story time at a public library. Tucker Carlson reports: "Canada has now become an atheist totalitarian state with amazing speed, and in Canada, it's now become a crime to object to sexualized Drag Queen shows for children ... you're not allowed to say a

word.

“Late last month, a pastor in Calgary was violently thrown out of an all ages—in other words, children’s Drag Queen story hour—for daring to object to the sexualization of children.

“In Canada, showing any disloyalty at all to the Trudeau government can get your bank account frozen, your truck seized.”

Jesse Kelly’s insight from last week comes to mind:

“We’re not playing offense yet. We’re in the early stages of playing real defense. But no offense yet. It will take time to learn. You’ll know we’re playing offense when we’re pushing our values in schools. Not just stopping theirs. When we’re building our statues ...”

 Contemporary American Christendom looks like the boxer in apostle Paul’s account from 1 Corinthians 9:26. It is nothing more than shadow boxing—just beating the air and failing to land any telling blow.

Unlike early America, where 106 of the 108 early American colleges were distinctly Christian. That’s if contemporary Christianity even dares to get into the ring with its opponent, secularism, it just flails around like one beating the air.

Yet, praise be to God as Gideon’s and Rahab’s are beginning to stand. {eoa}

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