

7 Reasons Pastors Stay Silent in Our Wicked Culture

Pastors are refusing to confront culture, sound alarms or to address today's political crisis—and it may be time for them to step down.

When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Are you he that troubles Israel?”

And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and you have followed the Baals” (1 Kings 18:17-18).

God is raising up a new generation of bold, prophetic messengers who are fearless, broken and undone by the weight of what's happening in our world. They couldn't care less if people leave churches they minister in. They aren't looking for accolades or book deals. They are criers in the wilderness, a new breed of burning ones who aren't into building churches, but they are very much into confronting culture and shocking the nations with prophetic unction.

We need bold, confrontational leaders formed after the spirit of Elijah, people who are commissioned and unafraid to expose the wickedness in the land. Sadly, it's rare to find men and women of God like this today.

Though I'm going to share seven reasons pastors are refusing to confront culture or to dive into politics from the pulpit, the honest truth is that I am so disturbed that I even have to write about this. How can supposed men and women of God just go on teaching generic Sunday school-style messages every Sunday morning when the escalating crisis in the world demands an immediate and Spirit-led response?

Pastors, it's time to repent for your silence—or step aside!

Repent from your tired, unimpressive and self-centered attempts to grow your church. Repent from being a wordsmith instead of a prophet. Repent from being careful when you are called to risk everything. Repent from keeping people happy and controversy at bay. You have lost your voice!

Pastors, if you don't have a prophetic voice, you don't have a ministry.

We live in a day where babies are being butchered, and many people are campaigning for the slaughter to be extended to those who survive the womb. Homosexual activism has muzzled so much of the church as these people force their vile beliefs on us. Pornography and human trafficking are destroying millions. Where is your response?

"If Thou canst do something with us and through us, then please, God, do something without us! Bypass us and take up a people who now know Thee not!" – *Leonard Ravenhill, Why Revival Tarries: A Classic on Revival*

7 Reasons Pastors Are Silent in a Wicked Culture

– Fear of man.

Fear of man is possibly the most obvious reason, though I don't believe it's the greatest reason in most cases. However, it's true that many pastors do fear confrontation. They lack confidence in their ability to tear down arguments and to advance with boldness. It's the Holy Spirit that enables this boldness, and, sadly, it's true that many pastors are not filled to overflowing with the activity of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

It's also true that many pastors are muzzled by their boards, elders and others who exhibit control in the church. It can be easy to succumb to the demands and expectations of those and others who have the ability to make life difficult if the pastor doesn't move in the direction they expect.

The opposite of the fear of man just very well may be the fear of the Lord. Where is the tremble in our pulpits today? Where is the troubling, weighty terror of God in our churches? What will it take for the fear of man to be displaced by fear of the Lord? It's embarrassing that there is so much fear of man, that pastors today are working overtime to keep the peace instead of calling people into a place of urgent response to a threatening, deadly spirit of the age.

The sword will divide, and those who are bound by fear of man will keep that sword in their sheath, if they possess one at all.

– Fear of loss.

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail, but rather that unrest was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous Man. See to it yourselves" (Matt. 27:24).

I believe the fear of loss is an even greater motivator for pastors to keep their mouths shut than the fear of man is. Today we have pastors who are wordsmiths instead of prophets, people who are experts at framing their words in such a way that no possibility of offense or disagreement is there. They are keenly focused on being balanced, avoiding controversy and developing a happy, encouraging atmosphere in the church that helps ensure there is no loss. People remain in their seats, money keeps coming in and everybody is happy.

Pilate would have given different leadership if the threat of riots and of losing his position and influence weren't there. He surrendered because he feared loss. While it might be quite offensive to compare a pastor to the man who turned Jesus over for death, we have to honestly consider the scenario. Instead of doing the right thing, Pilate caved. Pastors are turning on Jesus all too often today by rejecting his directives as they would prove to be too costly. Great loss would certainly come.

Pastors are right. The moment they actually have a strong opinion and take a strong position on a controversial topic, they absolutely will experience pruning.

While there are some absolutely amazing churches out there, in most churches you won't hear messages that cause any problems with your theology, cause offense or provoke you in any way. When is the last time you heard a message about abortion, homosexuality, pornography or other cultural issues? When is the last time your pastor has pierced the atmosphere with prophetic unction in response to something happening in our society? In some churches it happens. In most it does not. Why? Fear of loss. Pastors can't afford to lose people, money or their dream of a happy, growing church.

– They have no prayer life/prophetic unction.

This one is obvious and easy. If pastors are not spending time in the fires of intercession, they simply will not be alerted to much of anything in the spirit. On the contrary, it's absolutely impossible to live in the prayer room and not hear God's voice and to discern the crisis in the land.

Spending hours in that place of prayer will result in a burning and an inner tremble that will result in a cry and a shout and a decree from the pulpit on Sunday morning. There will be a fierce spirit that won't be silenced. The fear of man becomes laughable. Fear of loss is a price people are willing to pay. Their passion is no longer building their own dream but rather becomes all about being a voice in the wilderness, tearing down strongholds and refusing to be muzzled!

Peter went from a man driven by fear to a fearless wonder, coming out of 10 days in the prayer room and carrying a Pentecost fire that would not be ignored.

Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth was a man attested to you by God with powerful works and wonders and

signs, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know. You have taken Him, who was handed over to you by the ordained counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by lawless hands have crucified and killed Him, whom God raised up by loosening the pull of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it (Acts 2:22-24).

– They misunderstand the governmental purpose of the church.

“Ekklesia: A governmental gathering under apostolic leadership.” I have long been frustrated at the misunderstanding of the purpose of the church that is epidemic today. The key, foundational purpose of the church is to be a house of prayer for all nations. Further, the ekklesia is a governmental gathering. Under apostolic leadership, the church is called to be a governing force in a city.

Sadly, many pastors and people presume the church to be little else than a place to meet together, to sing and learn and to involve themselves in various ministries, programs and projects. Of course, there are many supplemental ministries and projects that are absolutely appropriate and valuable, but they can never supersede the primary call—to pray and govern.

Pastors should absolutely be responding to the crisis in the land, as they are the ones who have been commissioned to do so! They have been authorized, ordained, anointed and given a mandate to invade the darkness and command in the Spirit!

– They want to stay out of politics.

Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? Yet now you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring on us this Man’s blood.”

Peter and the other apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:28-29).

Many pastors reveal they intentionally stay out of politics.

Often they communicate this as if they are operating in some form of wisdom or caution, when in reality they are abdicating their responsibilities.

We are called to legislate. We are called to govern. If the church is a governmental agency, as I shared in the previous point, it makes absolutely no sense that pastors would not address political issues in the nation. Often a desire to avoid politics has to do with fear of man and fear of loss. They understand the moment they get political is the moment they draw a line in the sand. We need leaders, not managers. We need people who will boldly draw that line and make it very clear that they won't be stopped as they deal with the crisis at hand.

We wouldn't be as concerned about finding the right candidate for office, whether mayor of the city or president of the United States, if our church leaders had some guts and gave political leadership themselves.

Peter responded to politics just as we must. We must obey God rather than men.

– They just want to preach the Bible.

“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22).

It sure sounds spiritual to say they just want to focus on the Bible, but it's not possible to only do that. You can't simply preach the Bible and ignore what's going on in culture. What do you do with all the accounts of the apostles and others who confronted culture, wickedness and the spirit of the age?

If they are preaching and teaching the Bible, they must model their lives and ministries after the people they are studying. We need pastors with the spirit of Elijah. Where are those who lead like Gideon and tear down ungodly cultural altars?

We must, without question, not only be hearers but also doers. If these heroes of the faith confronted culture, then we must as well.

– Wrong theologies and a culture of positivity.

There are streams today that only focus on what is positive and encouraging. They presume to find strength there, and it gives license to ignore the negative and troubling issues of the day.

These are false-grace tainted doctrines, and they are a threat to the call for the church to go on the offensive against wickedness in the world.

We need prophetic leaders who will speak with unction and with fire in their guts, people who will aggressively assault the kingdom of darkness and deal directly with the great evil that's increasing in power.

Prophetic Voices, Rise Up

The days of carefully guarding our churches, salaries, security and reputations are over. It's time to let churches die if necessary. We need prophetic voices behind the pulpits, people who will scare away the pretenders and provoke the sleepers and confront the wickedness that is among us.

The demonic horde that has been released upon the world has been mostly uncontested. Their threats have gone unmet. We need governmental leaders in churches to finally stand firm for truth and to tear down arguments and altars with no thought of their own safety or well-being.{eo}

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