

A Word for Pharisaical Christians Who Think They're Prophetic

My congressman, Steve Scalise, faced death last year. He is a walking miracle.

Here is what he said about the National Day of Prayer, "On this 'National Day Of Prayer', I'm reflecting on the powerful role prayer has played in my life—both in good times and bad. Prayers inspired me and got my family through some incredibly tough days as I recovered from my injuries. Whatever you're going through: lean on prayer."

On this day in the Rose Garden, something special happened.

After worship music set the tone, the vice president said, "In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln, from these very grounds, urged Americans to pray so that, in his words, 'the united cry of the nation [would] be heard on high and answered with blessing.' The Bible tells us to be faithful in prayer, and that the 'effective and fervent prayers of a righteous [people] avails much.'"

Then the First Lady, a lady born in another country, read the Numbers blessing, "The Lord bless you; the Lord keep you .. .and may He grant you His peace." While watching her, I thought to myself, "I bet she's proud of America." But I won't go there.

The president said, "Our nation's honored tradition of prayer has sustained us and strengthened our trust that God will continue to watch over and accompany us through the best of times and the darkest of hours. May we, as Americans, never forget the power of prayer and the greatness of our Creator."

One of the president's guests was the courageous Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein of the Poway Synagogue. Missing fingers, with his hand still wrapped in bandages, he spoke his heart, "My life has changed forever, but it changed so I could make change ... we need to go back to basics and introduce a moment of silence in all public schools."

The chuckle of the day came when the rabbi, referring to his burgeoning relationship with the president, said, "I'd like to thank our dear honorable Mr. President for being, as they say in Yiddish, a *mensh* par excellence."

Then, the president, after giving a report on the fight against opioid addictions, acknowledged Ashley Evans and her miraculous deliverance. She beamed and said, "Finding God saved my life. It's been incredible."

To which the president replied, "Prayer works miracles, and prayer saves lives!"

During the prayer time, periodic "Amen's" and joyful praise sounds could easily be heard on the White House video feed. It was a camp meeting at 1600!

It was a grand experience. One of my friends called me and said, "Wow! I feel like I've been to church!"

Truth is, we had.

I moved on, thinking, "This was great! Who can have a problem with this?"

But before an hour had passed, I was soon met with a few "not so fast" moments. But not from the usual suspects in the MSM and elsewhere.

We live in a hostile time, and the predictable response from detractors to discredit and intimidate anything "religious" is just a part of life in an America swathed in carnality and political correctness.

Specifically, the name that really lights up the pagan peanut gallery? The Lord Jesus Christ.

We've learned to expect such hysterics while reminding ourselves about our "wise as serpents, harmless as doves" marching orders. You expect it from them. But from inside the tent of believers?

Soon after the Rose Garden gathering, political news outlet, The Politico, tweeted, "The White House is celebrating National Day of Prayer with a Christian band playing worship songs in the Rose Garden."

Attached to this simple sentence was a brief video clip of Jonathan Cain (the writer of Journey's classic, "Don't Stop Believing," and an unashamed Man of God), who was joined by a group of worshippers from Dallas' Prestonwood Baptist Church. They were singing,

*You give life, You are love/ You bring light to the darkness.
You give hope, You restore/ Every heart that is broken/ Great
are You, Lord!*

*It's Your breath in our lungs!/ So we pour out our praise to
You only!*

That's a far cry from the filthy lyrics of Beyonce and Jay Z that have pulsed through the White House air on more than one occasion.

I soon saw a retweet of this with a question pinned to it, "Curious if American taxpayers are footing the bill for this. Does anyone know?"

This wasn't from one of the expected cynics.

It came from a professed believer; a talented man who has written some insightful things, but many times with the intentional "stick in the eye" shock value against that which

might be deemed too conventional or too traditional, and almost always to an underlying drumbeat of inclusion.

Sure, it might sound cute sometimes, but after a special moment for the other believers in America, why such a silly comment?

Oh, the band of followers considered it such a brave question!

My question, why?

The brave question should perhaps target another grand Rose Garden gathering, such as one that honored an admitted traitorous combatant against America. The brave question could be, was money was paid? Were criminals released? Just asking.

Today's Rose Garden participants are safe targets of bluster. Write what you want, and I'm pretty sure they won't strap a bomb full of nails to one of their kids with the orders to blow up the place. No, that wouldn't cross the minds of those who were busy "Pouring out praises."

Sadly, we have a growing group of those who are quick to embrace their new ministry of self-anointed hall monitors to "keep the church in line." But don't dare confront the other beliefs. "We can't do politics. It's not inclusive."

The Family Research Council statement regarding today was perfect, "On this National Day of Prayer, Americans have an opportunity to set aside partisan bickering and the politics of division to unite in prayer for their nation, leaders and local communities." And based on the swill of mischief and anarchy of the last few years, we all need to stop and pray.

Let's pull together. We need all the help we can get.

Jesus clearly warned, "If the world hates you, remember that they hated me first" (John 15:18, NCV). I understand that. I can live with that. But the shooting from inside the tent?

It seems more pharisaical than prophetic. {eoa}

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).