

The Church Needs to Remember This Historical Lesson—Or Lose Freedom

The time is fast approaching when the church will need to remember the lesson of German Pastor Martin Niemöller.

Pastor Niemöller was a man of great courage who had been a submarine captain in the World War I before he entered the ministry. As a minister, he spoke out against the atrocities of the Nazi regime. On March 2, 1938, he was sent to prison, where he spent the war because of his Christian beliefs.

Nevertheless, this Christian hero apologized for his delay in opposing the Nazis. Here is what 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.”

You may think that Nazi Germany is far removed from today's America, but you should think again. There are forces in America which no longer believe in individual liberty and democracy. Our freedoms are being diminished day by day, and most Christians remain silent.

When the courts in California overruled the democratic vote against gay marriage, there was little outcry. When the government sabotaged the Defense of Marriage Act, few noticed. When Christians were fined for refusing to participate in gay marriage ceremonies, we were told we were bigots. After the

Supreme Court forced gay marriage on the nation, hundreds of florists and bakers have been attacked because of their beliefs. Now the “progressives” want our daughters to be forced to shower with boys who say they want to be girls. We are getting perilously close to the old Soviet communist concept of religious “freedom,” where you could have religious beliefs as long as you said nothing and did not act according to your faith.

Freedom of speech has been under attack in the cause of “politically correct” speech. University students, who used to demonstrate for free speech, now demand censorship on college campuses. In the Citizen’s United Supreme Court decision, so adamantly opposed by the “progressives”, the government actually argued that they had the right to censor books and movies. Must we wait until they are burning books to arouse from our slumber?

Under the guise of fighting crime, the government has passed thousands of laws that entrap innocent Americans every day. People have gone to jail for getting lost in a snowstorm on federal lands or failing to follow packaging regulations of foreign countries. The government can seize your money without proving anything, and you have to hire a lawyer to get it back, except that you can’t pay a lawyer because the government took your money. You can become a criminal even if you have no criminal intent, and the “progressives” fiercely resist any attempt to bring this elementary human right back into our legal system.

To top it off, we now know that government employees have been using their offices for political purposes. In 2012 the IRS and other agencies were used to hinder and attack conservative organizations. In 2016 the FBI and Justice Department used false evidence to spy on a political campaign. This same information was the used to spark an internal “resistance” campaign where government employees have leaked false information and subverted the elected administration. Some

want to go further and overthrow the elected president.

You may not like President Trump or his politics. You may not have much sympathy for a business man who can't defend himself because the government took his money. You may not agree with Catholics who are persecuted for their opposition to birth control. And the airways and internet are full of obnoxious political speech.

Just remember that if you are cheering for the government as it moves against others, you are only bringing the day of destruction closer to yourself.

Stand up for freedom, before there is no one left when they come for you. {eoa}

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