

Why We Need a Totally New Women's Movement

Last Saturday, one day after President Trump's inauguration, a huge group of women in pink hats made history when they took to the nation's streets to demand gender equality. Almost 500,000 women (and a few men) marched in Washington, and more than 600 smaller marches were staged in cities all over the world. There was no violence—which means, to their credit, these women behaved themselves as they took advantage of their right to free speech.

But I couldn't help but be disappointed as I watched coverage of the march and listened to speeches by the celebrities who addressed the crowd. The worst moment occurred when Madonna (who has done more to sexualize and objectify women with her music than most male pop stars) dropped multiple F-bombs on the crowd and talked of wanting to "blow up the White House."

"Yes I am outraged," said Madonna, referring to her disgust over Hillary Clinton's election loss. Then she used the F-word twice to tell Trump voters what she thought of them. CNN and MSNBC had to apologize for broadcasting the singer's profanity.

Other speakers were not as vulgar or childish as Madonna, but most of them—feminist Gloria Steinem, actresses Scarlett Johansson, Ashley Judd and America Ferrera, and liberal filmmaker Michael Moore—basically channeled fury over Trump's election and demanded that the right to abortion be protected.

Missing from the platform were any women who believe in protecting unborn babies. (Pro-life women's groups were told they were not welcome at the march.) Also missing on the stage were Christian women who think there might be a wiser way to confront Donald Trump's insensitivity than to stick a

middle finger in his face.

I understand why American women are concerned. Our new president does not have a good track record when it comes to his comments about women and their bodies. His lewd locker room talk, forever documented on YouTube, makes women feel both frightened and disgusted.

I also understand that women voters in this country care about justice. They fear that Trump could turn back the clock on rights for minorities and immigrants. And many Christian women (and Christian men like me) care deeply about those issues.

But the organizers of this women's march made a big mistake when they decided to make the whole event about abortion rights and anti-Trump slogans. They could have made room for the 53 percent of white women who voted for Trump—because those women also care about women's equality. At times it seemed that the march was less about serious political discussion and more about providing therapy for people who are depressed over Hillary Clinton's defeat.

What a missed opportunity.

The truth is we need a vibrant women's movement today more than ever. Women—and brave men who believe in gender equality—must speak out like never before against a legion of evils that are aimed at women around the world: Domestic violence, femicide, sex trafficking, female genital mutilation in Africa, forced child marriage, honor killings in the Middle East, lack of education for girls in developing nations and yes, sex-selective abortion of girls.

These horrific atrocities won't end until women cry out for justice.

The problem is the modern feminist movement is backslidden. It began as a Christian movement, but it was hijacked by people who want to make their entire cause about reproductive rights.

Organizers of last week's march even aligned their event with Planned Parenthood, an organization whose racist founder admitted that abortion could be used to weed out the black race.

It is time for a new women's movement that is more in line with the Christian feminists of the late 1800s who started the suffrage movement. Brave women such as Harriet Tubman, Lucretia Mott, Addie Waites Hinton and Sojourner Truth stood on street corners and in pulpits to mobilize peaceful resistance to the oppression of both women and African-Americans.

Those early heroes didn't have Madonna's millions; they sacrificed everything to win the right to vote for women. They did not lower their dignity when confronting the system that oppressed them. Their sermons were filled with holy fire, not expletives. They called our culture to embrace morality, not licentiousness. They protected life rather than devaluing it.

It was Christian suffragette leader Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) who said: "The world has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation because in the degradation of woman the very fountains of life are poisoned at their source." Mott did not live to see American women win the vote in 1920, but she laid the foundation for that victory.

If we truly want to stop the poison of injustice and elevate the dignity of women in the Trump era, we will need more than sassy outrage from Hollywood stars. We need a gutsy, courageous, grassroots Christian women's movement that is not afraid to stand for both gender equality and sexual purity; we need compassion for pregnant women as well as a mother's heart to protect unborn and unwanted children.

Such a movement won't come from Hollywood. It will be birthed out of the hearts of Christian women who carry the heart of Jesus for the oppressed, the victimized and the abused. {eoa}