

What do we do when evil rules?

Stand – Read Luke 21:7-19 – Pray

We know that in the last days there will be a fresh round of persecution to hit the believers right before He comes and gets us in the rapture. We know that we are seeing the formation of the one world government, economy, and religion right before our eyes. This system that is now gaining control has no place for a follower of Christ. It will do everything in its power to silence our voice. We can see the set up now and we need to be aware of it and follow what the scriptures tell us to do. We actually have a moment in Church history vaguely familiar to our time now and I want to share it with you.

If you have never read Foxe's Book of Martyrs, it is a must read now. He takes you from the first disciples to the time of the reformation and recounts their stories. It is an excellent scholarly account and will get you to see your problems as minimal at the very most.

We know that Constantine the Great who ruled from 305 – 337 AD. He adopted the "Edict of Toleration" in 313 AD and made Christianity the state religion. They had their "First Amendment" so to speak. But what happens in that type of rule? Once they are replaced the rules change with it and we see that happen after his death.

This is from Chapter three:

Persecution Under Julian the Apostate

This emperor was the son of Julius Constantius, and the nephew of Constantine the Great. He studied the rudiments of grammar under the inspection of Mardonius, a eunuch, and a heathen of Constantinople. His father sent him some time after to Nicomedia, to be instructed in the Christian religion, by the bishop of Eusebius, his kinsman, but his principles were corrupted by the pernicious doctrines of Ecebolius the rhetorician, and Maximus the magician. Constantius, dying the year 361, Julian succeeded him, and had no sooner attained the imperial dignity than he **renounced Christianity and embraced**

paganism, which had for some years fallen into great disrepute. Though he restored the idolatrous worship, he made no public edicts against Christianity.

He recalled all banished pagans, allowed the free exercise of religion to every sect, **but deprived all Christians of offices at court, in the magistracy, or in the army.** He was chaste, temperate, vigilant, laborious, and pious; **yet he prohibited any Christian from keeping a school or public seminary of learning, and deprived all the Christian clergy of the privileges granted them by Constantine the Great.** Bishop Basil made himself first famous by his opposition to Arianism, which brought upon him the vengeance of the Arian bishop of Constantinople; he equally opposed paganism. The emperor's agents in vain tampered with Basil by means of **promises, threats, and racks**, he was firm in the faith, and remained in prison to undergo some other sufferings, when the emperor came accidentally to Ancyra.

Julian determined to examine Basil himself, when that holy man being brought before him, the emperor did every thing in his power to dissuade him from persevering in the faith. Basil not only continued as firm as ever, but, with a prophetic spirit foretold the death of the emperor, and that he should be tormented in the other life. Enraged at what he heard, Julian commanded that the body of Basil should be torn every day in seven different parts, until his skin and flesh were entirely mangled. This inhuman sentence was executed with rigor, and the martyr expired under its severities, on June 28, A.D. 362.

Notice that it was the government officials and the false Christians that persecuted the true believers. Do we see this now? Are we finding ourselves in the same situation as Bishop Basil? Let's look at how the unbelievers are looking at you and I today. What kind of propaganda is going around? What is the narrative?

First you need to know how we are being labeled. Here is a list of things that they will use to decide.

Do you:

Believe in traditional marriage

Believe there are only two genders

Believe that America's Constitution was based on Biblical principles

Believe the Bible is the Word of God
Believe that America is a great nation
Believe that Abortion is wrong
There is only one way to Heaven

You also don't believe
In vaccine passports
Drag Queen story hour
ESG
CRT
Man Made Climate Change
Transgenderism
In Mail in Ballots

They have terms for you...

Christian Fundamentalist
Right Winger
Transphobic
Climate Denier
Election Denier
Christian Nationalist!

These are a few stories from the last few weeks in THEIR articles. Listen to the language and ask yourself, is this how they will think about me?

This is from Business news on October 23rd

Right-wing roadshow promotes Christian nationalism before the midterms

Some had taken the hours off the green areas of Pennsylvania for the two-day ReAwaken America Tour. Some paid up to \$500 for a VIP ticket. They were 5,000 strong, celebratory but angry about where the country was headed. He said he believes the 2020 election was stolen, that vaccines kill people and that America – its moral and civic foundations – is headed for complete collapse.

Now they waited to be baptized in a black plastic animal pool, from which the water was soaking and trembling—the new pure soldiers in their war for America.

Since April of last year, the ReAwaken America Tour has brought together **fanatical-election deniers, anti-vaccine doctors, self-proclaimed prophets and conspiracy theorists to enthusiastic crowds across the country**. The central message is that America's white, evangelical Christian lifestyle is under threat from the globalist cabal on the "awake" on the left.

The Traveling Carnival of Misinformation mixes entertainment, politics, and theology and creates an existential argument for attendees: The debate is no longer about Republicans versus Democrats, they say, it is about good versus evil. And it's time to choose a side.

Since its inception, the tour has been condemned by mainstream religious leaders for its extremist views. Community concerns have forced its organizers to relocate venues twice, in New York and Washington state. The Anti-Defamation League has targeted this in a report.

The halt at a Pennsylvania sports complex was what organizers of the midterm season hoped would result in a "red wave" of victory for the Republicans.

"We are facing a battle in our country," retired Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, Trump's former national security adviser, in an election denial, told the crowd. "I mean, Christianity is under attack. To be honest, it seems like everything is under attack."

Here is from the Post Millennial on October 24th

BREAKING: Hillary Clinton already accusing 'right-wing extremists' of stealing 2024 election

In the video posted to Twitter on Friday, the former secretary of state began, "Hello, Indivisibles. I'm here to highlight something that is keeping me up at night, and I know this group really understands what I'm about to say. I know we're all focused on the 2022 midterm elections and they are incredibly important, but we also have to look ahead, because you know what? Our opponents certainly are."

Clinton continued, "Right-wing extremists already have a plan to literally steal the next presidential election and they're not making a secret of it."

"The right-wing controlled Supreme Court may be poised to rule on giving state legislatures, yes, you heard me that correctly, state legislatures, the power to overturn presidential elections," she added.

"Just think if that happens, the 2024 presidential election could be decided not by the popular vote, or even by the anachronistic Electoral College, but by state legislatures, many of them Republican-controlled."

"But there's also good news in the face of this very real threat to democracy," Clinton continued. "Indivisible has launched, 'Crushed the Coup' to make sure we're ready to defend democracy in 2024. They've put together a list of critical races in six key states and how you can get involved."

I don't suggest ever reading Mother Jones, but this is from October 25th

Arizona GOP Candidate Kari Lake Airs an Ad Featuring a Homophobic and Extremist Pastor

He heads a church that calls for the "submission" of wives.

It's an ordinary and straightforward negative ad. A local businessman in Phoenix named Justin Erickson, who says he's a husband and father of five children, earnestly complains that his family and his employees are "overwhelmed" by rising costs, and, as ominous music plays in the background, he declares defiantly that he can't vote for Katie Hobbs, the Democratic gubernatorial candidate in Arizona, because she's "too liberal to be governor." The spot was paid for by the Yuma County Republican Central Committee and authorized by Kari Lake, the Trump-endorsed election denialist who is the GOP candidate for governor. It covers the Republican basics: A seemingly conscientious and decent owner of a small business—and his family—is dealing with economic hardship and feels endangered by those liberal Democrats. But the ad leaves out important information: Erickson is not merely a local business owner concerned with inflation; he is a homophobic and Islamophobic pastor.

Erickson runs a company called Hard Wired Coaching that conducts personality tests. His bio states he is “certified to coach and consult using the most accurate and practical psychometric on the planet.” He is also a pastor at the fundamentalist Desert Bible Church in Scottsdale. As the leader of that entity, he has preached slanderous anti-gay falsehoods, has declared Islam a “Satanic” force, and has advocated for “the submission” of women within their households.

This is from AP on November 2nd

Biden implores voters to save democracy from lies, violence

Warning that democracy itself is in peril, President Joe Biden called on Americans Wednesday night to use their ballots in next week’s midterm elections to stand up against lies, violence and dangerous “ultra MAGA” election disruptors who are trying to “succeed where they failed” in subverting the 2020 elections.

This is no time to stand aside, he declared. “Silence is complicity.”

After weeks of reassuring talk about America’s economy and inflation, Biden turned to a darker, more urgent message, declaring in the final days of midterm election voting that the nation’s system of governance is under threat from former President Donald Trump’s election-denying lies and the violence Biden said they inspire.

The president singled out “ultra MAGA” Republicans — a reference to Trump’s “Make America Great Again” slogan — calling them a minority but “driving force” of the Republican Party.

Pointing in particular to last Friday’s attack on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s husband, Biden said that Trump’s false claims about a stolen election have “fueled the dangerous rise of political violence and voter intimidation over the past two years.”

“There’s an alarming rise in the number of people in this country condoning political violence or simply remaining silent,” Biden added. “In our bones we know democracy is at risk, but we also know this: It’s in our power to preserve our democracy.”

This is from PsyPost last Tuesday:

Study links identity threat among white evangelicals to the belief Trump's election was part of God's plan

An analysis of data from the American Trends Panel relating to white evangelical protestant Christians found a link between the belief that Donald Trump's election was a part of God's plan and whether a person considers him/herself a religious minority. While 66% of white evangelicals who do not see themselves as a religious minority stated that Trump's election was a part of God's plan, this percentage increases to 74% for white evangelicals who do consider themselves a religious minority. The study was published in Politics and Religion.

Did not many of us stand in front of the state capitol in 2016 and ask God to intervene in the Election? Did He or did He not? Did we not see Roe get shot down this year? Is that good or bad.

We believe it was good but there is fallout for standing up for what is right.

This from the Washing Stand on November 16th

12 Republican Senators Back 'Disrespect for Marriage' Act in Key Vote

A bill supported by President Biden that would legalize same-sex marriage nationwide, threaten Christians who object to participating in LGBT ceremonies, and create a bonanza for trial lawyers to sue believers in natural marriage cleared a key Senate hurdle Wednesday afternoon — with the assistance of 12 Republicans.

H.R. 8404, labeled the "Respect for Marriage" Act by supporters and the "Disrespect for Marriage" act by critics, needed at least 60 votes to overcome a potential filibuster. It passed a cloture vote, 62-37. The bill would force all 50 states to recognize any marriage legally allowed in any other state and formally repeal the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). It would also create a private right of action, allowing anyone who feels discriminated against to sue any individual or business who refuses to participate in such a ceremony, even if motivated by faith-based objections.

“The U.S. Senate is making a mockery of marriage as it tramples on a foundational right — religious freedom of the individual,” said Family Research Council President Tony Perkins shortly after the vote.

The bill enshrines “the government picking winners and losers on the basis of who adheres to a particular, favored religious orthodoxy — and punishing those that don’t adhere to that,” Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) told “Washington Watch with Tony Perkins” on Wednesday. Its provisions are “likely to culminate in the removal of tax-exempt status from religious institutions” that uphold traditional sexual morality.

Later in the show, Senator Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) exhorted his fellow Republicans to vote the measure down. “If you care about our constitutional structure, which says that religious liberty is a foundational liberty — it’s our first liberty in the Bill of Rights — then you should be opposing this bill,” Hawley told Perkins.

The “dirty dozen” Republican senators who backed the bill include Mitt Romney (Utah), who centered his 2008 Republican presidential bid around his opposition to same-sex marriage; as well as midwestern Senators Roy Blunt (Mo.) and Joni Ernst (Iowa), who served as co-chairs of the congressional Values Action Team, which is “dedicated to advancing pro-life and pro-family policies in Congress.” (See the full list below.)

To mollify objections, senators added a putative “religious liberty” amendment to the bill, stating that religious nonprofits cannot be forced to offer “any services, facilities, or goods for the solemnization or celebration of a marriage.” But the amendment deals only with the ceremony itself, without protecting the right of religious charities to uphold their faith on any other policy involving marriage. Critics say this will impact faith-based orphanages and other social service organizations.

The bill also offers no protections for individual believers, such as florist Barronelle Stutzman and Masterpiece Cakeshop owner Jack Phillips, whose faith does not allow them to participate in same-sex ceremonies. “As our society becomes more secular, people are accepting the idea that our religious liberties extend no further than the four corners of the church or the synagogue, and that

simply isn't true," Lee told Perkins. "When the will of a secular society becomes hostile to religious pluralism, to the acceptance of religious minority beliefs, everyone suffers as a result." Traditional churches teach that Christians participate in other people's sins by condoning actions condemned by the Bible.

Do you see why we need to take advantage of all the legal protection we can now and set up community standards while we still can?

What about cults and other religions that don't believe in this bill? Surely, they won't stand for it, right?

Mormon church backs U.S. measure to protect gay marriage

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints said on Tuesday it supports proposed federal legislation intended to protect gay-marriage rights, as long as it also protects the right of religious groups to believe such unions are against God's word.

The Utah-based church said in a statement posted on its website its doctrine related to marriage - that God commanded it be between a man and a woman - would remain unchanged.

But the church said it would support the legislation after a bipartisan group of senators negotiated an amendment to the version passed by the U.S. House in July. The change states that the bill would have no impact on religious liberties protected under the U.S. Constitution.

Specifically, the Senate version states no church can face a civil lawsuit or other legal action for refusing to provide any service or access to its facilities for any marriage it opposes.

The Mormon church said the amended legislation "is the way forward."

"As we work together to preserve the principles and practices of religious freedom together with the rights of LGBTQ individuals, much can be accomplished to heal relationships and foster greater understanding," the church said.

We just read that it will not protect Mormon Individuals or Businesses. And we see they are on the slide anyway.

Well, what do we do? Run and hide? Start a militia? Store up Brown rice and bullets?

If we are to follow the early church the way that Bishop Basil did, we will not compromise no matter cost!

Mark 8:38

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

Jesus also told us...

John 15:18-27

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. 25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.' 26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Luke 21:14-15

Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

Luke 6:22-23

Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile you, and cast out your name as evil,
For the Son of Man's sake.

23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward is great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

Luke 6:27-31

27 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. 29 To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. 30 Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. 31 And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.

If they outlaw us, so be it. That is not our problem, it's theirs. We are to proclaim the gospel even to those that are running the rack. If they arrest us, so what. If they shut our doors, we will just meet somewhere else. We just keep doing what God has called us to do.

Let's close in Romans 8:31-39

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Do you have that confidence? Do you have that trust? Have surrendered to Christ and His will? Those that have can claim that scripture. Those that aren't will be caught up in this world's deception. If you are not sure you can choose today!

Put your faith in Christ now!

Stand – Pray - Song