

My Declaration: Come What May



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Letters to My Children

As Bob Dylan once said, "The times, they are a-changin'."

And they are changing at light speed for the church in America. Actually, they've already changed. Let me elaborate.

For years, decades actually, we as the church have been pretty much satisfied with sitting on the sidelines with our hands stuck deep into our pocket so as to not soil them with the dirty things of the world.... with sin, and sinners, and a culture that laughs at our God and at His Word. Now don't get me wrong, our reluctance to engage the encroaching sin in our nation and in our neighborhoods has nothing to do with us living the supposed "sanctified" or "separated" life the Scriptures talk about. It has nothing to do with us quoting, like a worn-out excuse, our mantra of "friendship with the world being enmity, or hatred, toward God" - or something spiritual sounding like that. * As if living a holy life was a sincerely held belief among the church today. Please. Our separation is not a sign of our spirituality, but of our apathy and our fear.

We desperately believe that, if we leave them alone... maybe they'll leave us alone.

Ya, think? Well, think again.

Church, to most of us, has become nothing more than a series of weekly feel-good, pep rallies. We pack into our safe-havens on Sunday and enjoy some inspiring music, an encouraging message that makes us feel good about who we are and the lives we are leading, and then, just as dessert follows a three-course meal, we top it off with some pot-luck fellowship dinners. Occasionally, and I do mean occasionally, the pastor or speaker will rail against some of the evils of our day: abortion, pornography, sexual immorality, homosexuality and the like. You take your pick, any evil will do. And we, like trained geese, will squawk and flap our wings in agreement, nod our heads in affirmation and cry out, as one man and one voice, that "something must be done about the moral decline and decadence in our nation. For the sake of our children's children, something must be done about *it!*"

Sounds good, doesn't it? Even feels kinda good at times, you know, getting all worked-up and hot-under-the-collar passionate about these kinds of things.

But the reality is that nothing much is being done about the proverbial, *it*. Not much at all. And, if you are like most of us who claim membership in church today in America, not much is being done about *it* by you. Or your friends. Or your church. Or your pastor. Or anybody that you know personally.

Did you ever wonder why?

My four. No more. Shut the door!

One of reasons is that, for the better part of the last century, basically since the last great missionary movement ran its course and died out in the late 1800s, we as the church have been building walls around our holy huddles as fast as we can lay the bricks. No house of sticks or straw for us. "My four. No more. Now shut the door!" We chose to ignore the Great Commission and sacrifice the example of our Lord on the altar of living the quite, tranquil, Walnut Grove kind of life.

"I don't care what the world does, just as long as it doesn't come near my beautiful house on Great Oak Avenue. You know, the one with the white picket fence, the swing set and slide, and Lassie running around in the backyard."

Get the point?

And we want our kids to be normal. (Uh, that's normal by the world's standards and not normal from God's point of view.) Which means, we don't want them, or us for that matter, to stand out too much in our society. We just want to be like everybody else. To fit in. To be popular. Accepted. Loved. If everybody is doing something... well, we want to do it too. Just not to the extreme. After all, we're Christians you know.

Thanks. I almost forgot.

The last thing we ever want to be said about us, or our children, is that "they are so heavenly minded, they're not of any earthly good." No way. Never. Geez. That's like a Scarlet Letter or a kiss of death. It's a birth mark or a bad tattoo that won't wash off. We just can't have that.

So, to keep that curse from being said about the church today, we go to great pains to mimic the world and its values, no matter how perverted they may be. Whatever the world or the culture is doing, we want to do it also... only Christianize it, sanitize it, and not let any of the nasty sinners join with us and dirty the whole thing up again..

Remember the soiling of hands we talked about earlier?

Think about it.

The Theys and the Ours

They have *their* colleges and universities. We have **ours**. They have *their* movies. We have *our* movies. They have *their* radio stations that play *their* music. We have *our* radio stations that play *our* music. They have *their* television and cable networks with all *their* secular programming. And we have *our* stations and networks that pump out *our* religious programming. They have *their* award nights, the Oscar and the Grammy. We have *our* award night, the Dove. They have Stephen King and John Grisham and Mary Higgins Clark. We have Frank Peretti and Ted Decker and Robert Whitlow.

"Whatever you got, we got it also. Only ours is better. More Christ-like."

Need we say more?

And all of this worked for the church until the last decade or so. Then, inevitably and prophetically, thing began to change.

As long as the world allowed us to dance and sing and raise our hands and speak of finite, unchanging truth in the church, we could live happily and satisfied in our plastic bubble.

"We won't bother you, if you will just leave us alone to live our lives quietly and among our friends. You do what you want with the world and all its sin, just keep it off my front porch. If you'll do that, I'll promise to ignore the commands of Christ to be 'salt and light' in this world. And, if you'll continue to grant me freedom of speech, I promise to only use that freedom in my church among my friends and never in the marketplace or in the media to somehow infringe on your world. No, I promise to never do that. I also promise, if you will just let me do my little Christian thing unmolested and all my myself, then I promise to 'keep my light hidden under a basket' and I won't 'put it on the table where people will see my good work and glorify the Father in heaven.' I promise. Just please leave me alone and let me do my little church thing." *

But the world has rejected our offer. They have said a resounding 'no' to our demands.

The False Virtue of Tolerance

In order for the world to become one and serve as the platform from which the antichrist will one day ascend, all intolerance must be eradicated from our society. All intolerance. No exceptions. There is now a common way of thinking, for a perceived common good. We are no longer individuals, but are now citizens of a world community. We are a village, a tribe, one big ol' dysfunctional family. And to be good global citizens, we must all think and act and speak the same.

No exceptions.

If the church, or anyone for that matter, chooses to believe or live in an intolerant fashion, they will find themselves at odds with and enemies of the new paradigm shift we see being formed right before our eyes. If we can only preach tolerance... that's tolerance of sin, or an alternative lifestyle, then we can peacefully co-exist

with the world, the culture, the society and our government. But if we choose to remain, in *our* words, orthodox and fundamental, then they will view us as, in *their* words, bigots and racists. And the society and government will deal with bigots and racists accordingly.

So what is the church to do? What does the Scripture say about the moral issues facing our nation today? What is God's view on tolerance?

Simply put, the God of the Bible is not tolerant, nor ever has been, of sin.

What is His view of abortion? The Scriptures call it murder. Intolerant.

How does God view homosexuality? Is it an alternative lifestyle to be accepted? Don't ask, don't tell. No, the Scriptures call it a perversion and an abomination. Intolerant.

What is His view on sexual immorality? You got it. Intolerant.

Divorce? The Scriptures say that God hates it. Intolerant.

Biblical Christianity runs headlong into the moral tolerance of our society with no common ground for compromise. None. And as Biblical Christians who make up Biblical churches, we also have no orders from our heavenly Commander-and-Chief to compromise or soft-sell the cancer of sin in our land. No matter what our nation's Commander-and-Chief may say.

"But if we don't compromise with the world and their sin, they will view us as un-loving, bigoted, homophobic, raciest and will do everything they can to silence our voices."

Exactly.

I guess that's why Jesus said, "And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed." *

What are we to do? How are we to stand against the fearful, it?

We have but one weapon. Truth.

Our Weapon of Choice: Truth

There is legislation pending that will classify Biblical preaching on abortion or homosexuality as hate speech, punishable as a hate crime. Why? Because the world now cannot allow finite, unchanging, Biblical truth to be spoken even within the safe-haven of a church building. The agents of tolerance cannot tolerate our intolerance of their sin. Now the tentacles of our society and government want to regulate exactly what is being preached and believed within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy. The dye has been cast. The enemy has breached the wall. It is time to determine exactly what kind of Christian you truly are.

What is happening today is not significantly different that what took place in Nazi Germany two generations ago when the Third Reich, like our Homeland Security Department, determined what are 'good' and 'toxic' churches. Good churches are tolerant and will be allowed to function and live, albeit regulated. Toxic churches are intolerant, divisive, bigoted and a blight to our society. They must go the way of the dinosaur, either willingly or by force.

Since we, as the church, failed to take the battle to the agents of darkness with the Truth of the Gospel, it looks like the Lord is going to allow the enemy to take the war to us. One way or the other, Truth will prevail.

Are you prepared?

The Declaration of Independence

Since it is apparent that we can no longer hide among ourselves, holding hands and doing our Christian dance, for me, there is only one course of action to take. I'll sum it up in the words that have been attributed to Edmond Burke:

"The only thing necessary for evil to flourish is for good men to do nothing"

We have been given the mandate from our Lord to speak His Truth. Satan is the father of lies and so is his world system. But we see in the Revelation how the final chapter of this life saga ends. I know what side I want to be on. Do you?

And if we are the good men, the called-out ones, the Church... we can no longer remain silent to the sin and abomination in the land. Where are the Elijah's and John the Baptist for our day? Where are the men of God who the Scripture states, "the world was not worthy of them." *

Where are they?

Are you one of them? Am I?

Today is my Independence Day.

It is the day that I claim independence from the flawed example of the church that craves worldly acceptance and feigns sold-out commitment to Christ. It is a day of independence whereby I let all mankind know that I will speak His word, tolerant or not, wherever He desires it spoken. I will strive to surrender myself to Him daily in all aspects of my life and no longer live for the acceptance or accolades of this sinful world or fallen man. And I will accept the consequences of speaking His Truth with the same willingness as the Reformers of old or the heroes of Hebrews 11.

Adveho quis may. Come what may.

Will you join with me? Come what may.

* James 4:4; Matthew 5:14-16; John 3:19-20; Hebrews 11:38