

August 9, 2020

The Role of the church in this time of opportunity; COVID-19, tribalism and political upheaval!

"United in Christ, Maturing in Christ"!

Galatians 3:28 ESV There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Introduction

In the midst of the virus, tribalization, and political upheaval what should the church be doing?

Micah 6:8 Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God!

What is going on in the "Evangelical" church?

Now we are in the midst of fighting the battle for the "sufficiency" of the Word of God

Is the Bible sufficient to deal with the complex issues of the day?

We looked at the history of "social justice" and that "social justice" has no Biblical support

Last week we began to look at the unity we have in Christ and the impact that has on our lives in community

What we will see over the next few weeks as we continue to look at these issues that divide; the virus, mask, tensions, and political upheaval is this: the only possible unity is in and around Christ Jesus and our faith in Him

What says the Scripture?

Galatians 3:28 ESV There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

All are simultaneously sinners in the flesh and the old self and saints in and through Christ Jesus
How about just a tad more Scriptural validation

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 ESV *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

Romans 12:4-5 NIV *For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

Only in and around Christ, by His Spirit and holding closely to His Scripture can we find the guidance and unity that we will need to deal with these admittedly complicated issues of our day

Let's do a quick recap of last week then we will move on to v12

Colossians 3:1-4:6 ESV

V1-4 *If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

If we have been raised to new life

If we have been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life our focus will not be of this world

Jeremiah 31:31-33 *New deal, not written on stone, one that could not be kept, I want you to know what I am going to do: I will put my law in your mind and*

write it on your heart, I will be your God and you will be my people...

Ezekiel 36:24-27, I will take you from the enemy, I will cleanse you with my blood, I will take away all your idols, I will give you a new heart and a new spirit, I will put my Spirit in you and will cause you to do what I want you to do!!!

Ephesians 2:1-6, We were dead spiritually, we were following the devil and freely and willingly operating in his world, we were disobedient, by the way this is who we all were, doing what the flesh and self wanted to do, we were children of the death and headed for God's wrath at judgement, like everybody else....BUT...because of His mercy, when we were dead, God made us alive, united me with Christ and other believers and positionally seated us in heaven at the right hand of Jesus

John 3:1-8, Jesus calls it being born again

We must be other world focused

Only when we are born again

Only when we are radically raised to a new life will we be other world focused

5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Mark 7:20-23 ESV
And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21 For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.") 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you

were living in them. 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Being tied up in and engulfed in the things of the world bring great spiritual disaster
People, places and possessions can be dangerous
Sin must be killed out by prayer, fasting and by...
We have talked about being raised with Christ
We have talked about being united in Christ
We have talked about putting off the old and wicked
This week we will focus on putting put on the new
We only can do any and all of these by our being united with Christ and with each other

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

V12, Ephesians 4:24 ESV And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness

V13, Mark 11:25 ESV And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

V14, 1 Peter 4:7-9 ESV The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. 8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Ephesians 4:2-3 ESV With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

V15, Romans 8:28 ESV And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Ephesians 2:16-17 ESV And might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. V16-17,

The apostle would have the word to be diligently searched, heartily received, and carefully observed
Colossians 1:12 ESV Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Colossians 2:7 ESV Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Summary

Live for God's glory

Know and live in obedience to His commands

Be other world focused

Be more concerned about others than ourselves

Love the world less and God and others more, Mt. 22

Working in His local churches advancing His Kingdom

Being united with and in Christ with Him and others

Putting off the old self and all sin

Putting on Christ and His Spirit

Next week we will look at how we are to treat others in community!

What We Believe

Four years ago, what is now known as the Black Lives Matter Global Network began to organize. It started out as a chapter-based, member-led organization whose mission was to build local power and to intervene when violence was inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes.

In the years since, we've committed to struggling together and to imagining and creating a world free of anti-Blackness, where every Black person has the social, economic, and political power to thrive.

Black Lives Matter began as a call to action in response to state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism. Our intention from the very beginning was to connect Black people from all over the world who have a shared desire for justice to act together in their communities. The impetus for that commitment was, and still is, the rampant and deliberate violence inflicted on us by the state.

Enraged by the death of Trayvon Martin and the subsequent acquittal of his killer, George Zimmerman, and inspired by the 31-day takeover of the Florida State Capitol by POWER U and the Dream Defenders, we took to the streets. A year later, we set out together on the Black Lives Matter Freedom Ride to Ferguson, in search of justice for Mike Brown and all of those who have been torn apart by state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism. Forever changed, we returned home and began building the infrastructure for the Black Lives Matter.

Global Network, which, even in its infancy, has become a political home for many.

Ferguson helped to catalyze a movement to which we've all helped give life. Organizers who call this network home have ousted anti-Black politicians, won critical legislation to benefit Black lives, and changed the terms of the debate on Blackness around the world. Through movement and relationship building, we have also helped catalyze other movements and shifted culture with an eye toward the dangerous impacts of anti-Blackness.

These are the results of our collective efforts.

The Black Lives Matter Global Network is as powerful as it is because of our membership, our partners, our supporters, our staff, and you. Our continued commitment to liberation for all Black people means we are continuing the work of our ancestors and fighting for our collective freedom because it is our duty.

Every day, we recommit to healing ourselves and each other, and to co-creating alongside comrades, allies, and family a culture where each person feels seen, heard, and supported.

We acknowledge, respect, and celebrate differences and commonalities.

We work vigorously for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people.

We intentionally build and nurture a beloved community that is bonded together through a beautiful struggle that is restorative, not depleting.

We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a prerequisite for wanting the same for others.

We see ourselves as part of the global Black family, and we are aware of the different ways we are impacted or privileged as Black people who exist in different parts of the world.

We are guided by the fact that all Black lives matter, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status, or location.

We make space for transgender brothers and sisters to participate and lead.

We are self-reflexive and do the work required to dismantle cisgender privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be disproportionately impacted by trans-antagonistic violence.

We build a space that affirms Black women and is free from sexism, misogyny, and environments in which men are centered.

We practice empathy. We engage comrades with the intent to learn about and connect with their contexts.

We make our spaces family-friendly and enable parents to fully participate with their children. We dismantle the patriarchal practice that requires mothers to work

"double shifts" so that they can mother in private even as they participate in public justice work.

We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and "villages" that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable.

We foster a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking, or rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual (unless s/he or they disclose otherwise).

We cultivate an intergenerational and communal network free from ageism. We believe that all people, regardless of age, show up with the capacity to lead and learn.

We embody and practice justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.

Black Lives Matter Makes Its Marx

July 27, 2020, Tony Perkins

If fans flipped on their TVs hoping for an escape from the madness of 2020, the return of major league baseball wasn't it. Americans who tuned in to Friday's season openers, desperate for a return to something normal, were forced to witness another protest: the players'. In some ballparks, like the Washington Nationals, the politically-charged messaging was everywhere -- from the Black Lives Matter "unity" ribbons to the "BLM" stenciled on the back of the pitchers' mound. But when the entire league is kneeling, it only takes one player to stand out. And for the Giants' Sam Coonrod, there was never any question.

"I'm just a Christian," he said after the game. "I don't think I'm better than anybody," he tried to explain. "I chose not to kneel. I feel if I did kneel, I'd be a hypocrite. I don't want to be a hypocrite." Unlike a lot of Americans, Sam knows that there's a lot more to the Black Lives Matter organization than the slogan. "[I] just can't get on board with a couple things I've read about Black Lives Matter. How they lean towards Marxism and ... they said some negative things about the nuclear family." At the end of the day, Sam explained, he doesn't mean any "ill will." But it's time, he would argue, for our country to realize what's really behind the hashtag.

Ordinary people in this nation, well-meaning Christians even, want to believe that Black Lives Matter is just a crusade for racial justice. That it's a peaceful group, if not a passionate one, fighting for civil rights. They buy into

the sentiment, not realizing that what they're really adopting in those three words is a violent revolution with one goal: annihilating America. This isn't the stuff of posters and wristbands. These are extremists with a profoundly chilling vision. And they'll be the first ones to tell you so.

Co-founder Patrisse Cullors has been surprisingly open about the group's real agenda for years. "We are trained Marxists," she warned. "We are super-versed on ideological theories." During a candid interview in 2015, Cullors explained that BLM has "really clear direction as to where we want to take this movement. I don't believe it's going to fizzle out," she said, somewhat prophetically. "It just gets stronger..." And violence is just one way they intend to be heard.

"If this country doesn't give us what we want," Greater New York Black Lives Matter President Hawk Newsome warned, "then we will burn down this system and replace it." But it might surprise the majority of Americans to know that "what they want" isn't an end to police brutality or racism. It's an end to freedom, speech, religion, and true equality. "All you shopkeepers putting signs in your stores, you schoolteachers programming your students to lock arms, you men and women of the cloth preaching about unity, you civic leaders urging community action... [beware]," Brent Bozell writes. To the Christian leaders, anxious to show their sympathy, "While you're sermonizing about the need to show support for their movement, BLM leaders are sermonizing about destroying yours."

How many Christians plaster "Black Lives Matter" across their social media pages not realizing that they're supporting a group that wants to abolish the nuclear family? Or that the movement they're identifying with justifies cop killings, prostitution, anti-Semitism, anarchy, and the suppression of speech and religion? Too many people have been taken in by this whitewashed version of the BLM movement in the aftermath of George Floyd's death, not realizing the dangerous agenda lurking beneath. That's a mistake, FRC's Ken Blackwell argued on "Washington Watch." "This is about the Left advancing a strategy to fundamentally change our country. And to effect this change, they first want to destroy it. They want to make sure that there is no positive interpretation of our historical narrative that includes anything that makes us uniquely American."

There are a lot of good people in this country who think by embracing this cause and repeating its mantra that they're somehow ascribing value to the lives of African Americans. Far from it. "Black lives don't matter to Black Lives Matter," Ken insists. "It cares about promoting a toxic ideology." And the church -- and more broadly, the nation -- need to wake up to that reality. This is a crusade so menacing, Dan McLaughlin points out, that even Democratic leaders "warned their own party privately in 2015 against associating with the group."

Of course, Americans are terrified that if they don't embrace Black Lives Matter, they'll be labeled as bigots and racists. The extremists are counting on that fear to give them cover as they march, unchallenged, through our cities. But if Christians and other citizens care about this great nation, they need to take a page out of Sam

Coonrod's book and find their voice. Because if we actually follow this revolution to its conclusion, Mike Gonzalez and Andrew Olivastro warn, black lives -- and all lives -- would be harmed. "Theirs is a blueprint for misery, not justice. It must be rejected."

David Lane, American Renewal Project

CA Governor Gavin Newsom was the first governor in the country to issue a statewide stay-at-home order, directing all residents on March 19 to refrain from leaving their homes indefinitely. Apprehension and threat to fundamental freedom by autocratic overreach should have been the immediate reaction by Golden State residents; but it wasn't.

Newsom became Mayor of San Francisco on January 3, 2004. On his 36th day in office, Newsom, still wet behind the ears, issued a directive to the San Francisco city-county clerk to issue marriage licenses to homosexuals, falsely claiming that California's Constitution equal-protection clause gave him the authority to do so. On August 12, 2004, the California Supreme Court voided all of the licenses that had been issued in February and March.

This violation of constitutional law provides a glimpse into Newsom's moral character, his directive single-handedly overriding 4.6 million Californians who on March 7, 2000, had voted with 61.2% in favor for state statute California Proposition 22, Limit on Marriages, which declares that only marriages between men and women are legally binding in California.

Newsom demonstrated then, as he's doing now, his deliberate flouting of the law and the will of the people; except, of course, when it concerns his own brusquely imperious demands in his exercise of unwarranted power.

America's 18th-century forefathers experienced a similar peremptory autocrat in the form of the King of England.

Thomas Jefferson formally indicted such high-handed, tyrannical behavior in the Declaration of Independence: "A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act that may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people."¹

Not one to be dissuaded by disparaging First Amendment religious liberty rights, Governor Newsom's Stay-At-Home-Order of March 19 led to CA churches being designated as "non-essential," while liquor stores, marijuana distribution centers, and abortion clinics were deemed "essential."

With nothing but grace, love, compassion, humility and other demonstrations of the Spirit of Christ, CA pastors closed their churches down across the state from March 22 to Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2020. Next, on July 3rd, Newsom outlawed singing in churches. Subservient subjection to totalitarian regimes only acknowledges and legitimizes the state's absolutism, leading us to 1 Samuel 17:6 "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Over the last 100 years, American Christendom has suffered an increasing departure from its articles of faith, elevating "political authority as though the Bible gives the state carte blanche to regulate individual, social and ecclesiastical freedoms out of existence if deemed necessary."²

Americans have willfully erased from both their memory and their nation's history how we got here. The American Founders established a Republic, in which We The People rule through our elected representatives. Governor

Newsom and his fellow blue state overbearing governors and mayors are in dire need of a refresher course for some updating. Supercilious and self-absorbed, they will have to be removed from office in 2022 if liberty is to prevail. In California - with more Evangelicals than any other state in the Union, aside from Texas - time will tell whether Christians can rise to the occasion.

Evangelical pastors will have to take their civics game to the next level if America is to survive. While preaching sermons, circulating petitions, or taking a Jericho March around the Capitol are needed, they are not denominations of political currency, in contrast to how many votes can be brought to the table. This civic precept needs to be deeply anchored into Evangelical and Pro-Life Catholic Christian leadership.

Well-known British evangelist, pastor and author Alan Redpath writes in his 1962 Christian classic *The Making of a Man of God: Lessons from the Life of David*: "His election was clear to everyone because the next thing that happened was that he came into collision with Saul. It is impossible for a man chosen of God to be at peace with the children of the devil. A man [or a culture] anointed by the Holy Spirit is immediately the target of Satan - the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman will always be at enmity until Jesus comes."

Covid-19, the plundering and burning of America's cities, the destruction of relics and monuments, and the ruthless push to defund local police make abundantly clear that America is being targeted by Satan. We are engaged in a spiritual battle.

Exposing Satan's sinister end game, former Ohio Congressman Bob McEwen said: "85 cents out of every dollar that goes to the cause of global evangelism comes from the 4% of the world's population who call themselves Americans. In other words, if you took the amount of giving from 96% of the people on earth [15%] increased it 5 times - to 75 - you still would not have as much support for the cause of Christ as Americans cheerfully give every year.

"The United States of America is the world's lighthouse for the gospel. And while most Americans don't appreciate that ... rest assured Satan understands it very well. ... The book, Rules for Radicals was written by Saul Alinsky. Barack Obama taught community-organizing courses using it as a textbook. Hillary Clinton had a mentor relationship with Alinsky in college and wrote her undergraduate thesis on him. Black Lives Matter is perfectly implementing the Rules. That book - now impacting all of us every day - is dedicated on page 1 to Lucifer. Satan understands the battlefield."

Commenting on the burning of Bibles in front of the Mark O. Hatfield Courthouse in Portland, Eric Metaxas said: "A century before the Third Reich, German poet Heinrich Heine prophesied that where books are burned, humans will soon be burned also. Antifa/BLM has chosen the brazenly atheist path of Joseph Goebbels. Let the reader understand."

Former Thousand Oaks Mayor and City Councilman Pastor Rob McCoy finally has had enough. After shutting down Calvary Chapel God speak on March 22, he reopened on May 31. Last week he received a call from

Rigoberto Vargas, Director at Ventura County Public Health. Responding to Vargas' question whether he would be obeying the health orders from CA Governor Newsom, Pastor Rob asked: "Are you calling all of the churches?"

"No, just calling yours because we had a complaint."

"Well," Pastor Rob replied, "if you're wondering if we are complying by the First Amendment, the answer is 'yes'. If you're wondering if we are complying by the edicts of the governor the answer is 'no'."

"My personal feeling is you had your chance," he added. "We complied by all of the 'social distancing', we worked through the process of you calling [churches] 'non-essential', wearing masks, following CDC standards, because we didn't know about the virus. But now we have empirical data."

"It doesn't matter if you want to create censorship, stifle knowledgeable epidemiologist who put forward something that's different from your narrative. We've looked at the data, we've done our homework."

"We abided by what the governor was requiring, we willingly yielded [as to] help our sheriff's department and the like, but then when we saw the governor and mayor of Los Angeles, and every other elected official embracing, condoning, and promoting the burning and looting of our businesses and our cities - it's over, we're not doing this game anymore."

"We just wanted to be left alone to worship our God. But you want to come and shut us down, you want to turn off our water and power, you want to fine us? You go ahead."

"We've had every opportunity to go national. You don't want the optic or narrative of watching a pastor getting arrested ... you may win at the Ninth Circuit, you may even win at the U.S. Supreme Court, but you're going to lose the hearts of the people because Americans love liberty."

On June 1, Governor Newsom said to those burning, looting and demolishing our cities: "For those of you out there protesting, I want you to know that you matter. To those who want to express themselves, God bless you. Keep doing it. Your rage is real."

After squandering the biblically-based culture, American Christendom has now only a faintly visible footprint left in the culture, meanwhile entering an era of struggle for sustainable freedom.

[twitter.com/stillgray/status/1289512762733785088]

America is doomed unless Christians revive American Christianity by returning to Jesus' ekklesia assignment in Matthew 16:18.

David Lane, American Renewal Project

1. www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript
2. Joseph Boot, <https://www.ezrainstitute.ca/resource-library/articles/freedom-the-church-and-state-absolutism/print/>
3. www.amazon.com/Making-Man-God-Lessons-David/dp/0800759222
- 4.