

Why aren't we getting anywhere?

A Scripture that I've been quoting A LOT lately, comes from the book of Ezekiel. Here it is...

Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: 'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman, when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life. But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.' "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me. When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you shall surely die!' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. (EZ 33:1-9 NKJV)

As a preacher/pastor, I consider myself a watchman. Therefore, naturally, I consider other preachers/pastors watchmen as well. I can't speak for them, but I personally, saw and see, a "sword coming upon the land". So, you know what I did? I blew the trumpet and I'm still blowing it.

Yay for me, right? No, not yay for me.

Boo for the majority of preachers, most of whom have refused to believe that, (A) there was a sword coming upon the land or, (B) it wasn't their job to sound the trumpet about things that didn't directly, specifically impact or attack Christianity itself.

But Christians don't live in church. They live in the world outside the church... upon which a sword was coming. Oh by the way, it's merely a matter of time, as everyone knows, until that sword is more clearly manifested in the church... or have you not read a history book?

Imagine the following scenario.

In some foreign country, where the government is actively restricting freedom of worship, leading to, or already resulting in the persecution of Christians, where we're encouraged to pray for them and send Bibles, etc, we discover that there is a Christian, peaceful, resistance movement against the restricting, persecuting government. What would you do? How would you respond to such knowledge?

Would you, (A) encourage the pastors to support it and to encourage their congregations to support it, or would you, (B) advocate that the church should not be engaging the culture on that level, and should be just going on with standard gospel preaching, Bible study, Sunday school, worship songs, etc?

Don'tcha think that if the church has the opportunity to love its neighbors by supporting things that are good for its neighbors and culture, and withstanding/opposing things that are bad for

it's neighbors and culture – whom they and we are charged to love and evangelize – that it should?

But even if “the church” chooses to not engage the culture on that level, don'tcha think that the watchman ought to at least blow the trumpet and say that there's a storm coming upon the land, thereby alerting the church to what's happening... possibly opening the door to someone hearing from God that he/she perhaps ought to run for office, or participate in something that promotes freedom for the church's and his/her own neighbors?

I guess my question is, how can “the church” remain so silent in and through all that we've experienced in the past 15 or 16 months? How can it not point out the myriad lies, all of which come from the devil? How can it not assist people in discerning when, where and how they are being deceived by the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air? Really?

We will gladly help a churchman deal with an irritating boss, but not with a tyrannical government?

We will counsel a woman on how to deal with a sinful, unfaithful, drunken, abusive husband, but not how to deal with a government that will take her children from her and do with them what *they* see fit?

We will help young people recognize the wiles of the enemy that they be not distracted, but only if the distractions are non-political? Really? If the government lies to our young people about the constitution of the nation in which they live, and in which is codified their God given rights, we are not supposed to counsel them that they're being lied to? Are we not to help them preserve the truth about their government and the culture in which they're participating?

When the government steals taxpayer money upon promise to provide services, and then denies those services unless the taxpayers endanger their children, giving sovereignty over them to the state... we're not to blow a trumpet for that warning?

Really?

In his book, “*The Day I Was Crucified (as Told by Jesus the Christ)*”, author Gene Edwards details a fictional but possible/plausible conversation between the Christ on the cross, and satan. He writes...

“I addressed the fallen angel. 'Draw near, Lucifer. Long ago you were my servant. Now you are but the captain of the damned, and you wait for naught but for your own damnation. Liar of liars. Prince of all darkness, ruler of the world's system, head of all religion, government, science, fashion, education, and commerce – you have boasted that you brought down man. Not so, for it is man who commanded you here. You shall be found out to be the ruler of nothing. World, approach me. You are the one who brings man into his first snares. You are the forger of men's bonds. Bring here you chains. Before I breathe my last, it will be chains that bind you.’”

We tend to forget, to lose sight of the world, the world's system and who is in charge of it... the prince of the power of the air... the ruler of this world... the enemy of our souls.

When we in the Church of Jesus Christ see the enemy hurting, adversely affecting, deceiving, enslaving God's Creatures, coming in like a storm to steal, kill and destroy, it is ours to blow the trumpet.

Indeed, "*storm[s]... upon the land*" take many forms. How dare we in Christ's pulpits, pick and choose which ones will warrant a trumpet blast, and which ones about which we will be silent.

I think rather that we are to cry aloud and spare not. It is recorded in Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 58, verse 1, that he warned Israel, "*Cry aloud and spare not: Lift up you voice like a trumpet; Tell my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins*".

Wanna know what their sin was? I'll tell you. They participated in the sins of the culture that surrounded the congregation. There was to be a warning about participating in the godlessness that surrounded them: the godlessness of the people of the land: the godlessness of the nations: the godlessness of all that was under the sway of the god of this world.

Do you suppose that the preachers/prophets/kings ought to have been warning them about how to recognize the godlessness? Of Course!

Was not the same ruler of this world, ruling those whom were not part of God's followers, and was there not specific, detailed warning against the things that the "nations" did, which God's followers were not to do? Of Course!

Are we to now assume that somehow governments, which Edwards characterizes rightly as under the sway of the prince of this world, are now somehow otherwise and to be trusted as the oracles of God?

Here's why we're not getting anywhere... we're not blowing the trumpet.

If the church starts "blowing the trumpet" now, do you think, that I think, that the nation will turn around? Whaddaya think, I'm stupid?

Of course God *could* use us to turn the nation around... but that's not my concern. My concern is the flock of God: warning them, teaching them, enlightening them, perhaps even expanding them. If God chooses to use that ON the culture, amen to that. That's His concern. Mine, as is every other preacher's/pastor's, is to cry aloud and spare not.

From Martin Luther...

"And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we shall not fear for God has willed His Truth to triumph through us".

Use your heads. Cry aloud. Spare not. Blow the trumpet. Speak the Truth. Be not afraid.

Pastor