

## Barbarians at the Gate

I had intended to bring a new year's message today.... But instead, I thought it might be fitting to address events that have happened over the last few days in our nation's capital and could be our experience over the next few years.

One of the images that caught my attention during the recent events was that of a man dressed up as a barbarian standing in the Senate chambers, at the very place where the VP often sits. To me, that image just about sums up the direction our country is going. The barbarians are at the gates. Or worse yet, the barbarians are in the process of taking over.

To me, that barbarian standing in the senate chamber represents the fact that almost all of the institutions of our nation are under the control of what I call "the barbarians" – i.e., the leftists, the socialists, the communists. They largely control the government, education, entertainment, the media, sports, and even a large part of the church.

I'm not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I can envision what is about to happen to our country. I think there is good reason to believe that the recent election was seriously irregular, to put it mildly. The results of that election will be that the leftists will shortly take over the federal government. They will have nearly total control. And if those officials do what they have promised to do, our nation will lurch further toward the trash heap of history. Virtually all of the good things that President Trump did will be speedily reversed. The new administration will institute policies and laws that will endanger our basic constitutional rights to free speech, free exercise of religion, freedom of assembly, and freedom to bear arms. Perhaps, within not many years, this church will face genuine persecution. If the leftists do what they say they intend to do, we are in serious trouble.

What do we do in the face of these prospects? Let's consider three biblical principles that we should remember in times like this.

I. God is sovereign.

*Psalms 22:28 For the kingdom [is] the LORD'S: and he [is] the governor among the nations.*

*Ps 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*

*Isa 46:10-11 [God declares] the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: ... I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*

*Dan 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

*Eph 1:11 [God] worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*

- A. Even when things seem to be turning in a very tragic direction, and even when things seem chaotic and out of control, we affirm that God is still on his throne. God is sovereign.
- B. Allowing the events that we've just seen were no mistake. These events will ultimately fulfill the good purposes of God. God has a purpose or multiple purposes in everything he allows to happen.
- C. Perhaps the purpose of God is to judge our nation. America as a whole certainly deserves the judgment of God.
- D. Rom 13 tells us that "the powers that be are ordained of God." God sets rulers up and he casts them down. Even when evil rulers with bad policies come to power, God is still in control.

**Trans:** We continue to believe that God rules the affairs of men. Even within chaos, God reigns.

II. Worldviews matter. Or you could say ideas matter; ideas have consequences.

What we've seen recently is the result of worldviews clashing.

- A. Your worldview, of course, is your way of looking at the world. It's the lens through which you understand yourself and everything else. A worldview answers the most significant questions in life:
  - 1. Is there a God? Who is he? What does he want from me?
  - 2. What is truth? What is the source of truth? Can I know the truth?

3. Who am I? Am I made in the image of God, or am I merely the result of blind, random, evolutionary chance? Am I an animal or am I the special creation of a personal, loving God?
  4. What is the purpose of my life? How should I live?
- B. The Christian worldview asserts that God exists and he has revealed himself and his will in the Scriptures. God has told us how he wants us to live, and we are accountable to him for our actions.
- C. America was founded on a Christian worldview. The vast majority of the founding fathers were professing Christians. Even the unorthodox founders still had a high regard for the Bible, for the Christian faith, and for Christian morality.
- D. John Adams quote<sup>1</sup>: “We have no Government armed with Power capable of contending with human Passions unbridled by morality and Religion. [Greed], Ambition, [and] Revenge ... would break the strongest Cords of our Constitution as a Whale goes through a Net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious People. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Only morality based on religion has the power to control human passions. And when you remove Christian morality, the only power remaining to control people is the state—the government.

Adams knew that the constitution would work only for decent, self-controlled people.

Adams further said: “...should the People of America [begin] practicing Iniquity and Extravagance; ... [plunder] and Insolence: this Country will be the most miserable Habitation in the World.”

Unfortunately, iniquity, extravagance, plunder, and insolence are exceedingly common in our country today, and many voices defend such attitudes and actions. The results will lead to misery for many.

WILLIAM PENN--If you are not governed by God, you will be ruled by tyrants.

---

<sup>1</sup> From John Adams to Massachusetts Militia, 11 October 1798.

The next couple of years will show whether Adams and Penn were right or not. If the ruling party pushes through its stated policy goals, America may indeed become a most miserable habitation; perhaps not the worst in the world, but far worse than it is now—at least for Christians who take their faith seriously. For those who stand opposed to iniquity, extravagance, and plunder, America might become a miserable place to live.

- E. The nation today is almost evenly divided between a Christian worldview and a secular worldview. The secular worldview makes several very powerful claims.
  - 1. There is no god, or at least, the Christian God is certainly false. We are not accountable to a non-existent God.
  - 2. Do your own thing. Please yourself. Make up your own morality. Make up your own identity. Choose your own gender.
  - 3. Nothing is certain. All you can know for sure is your own feelings, your own point of view.
  - 4. Since there is no absolute morality, people should be free to do whatever they want. Don't judge anyone, especially in the realm of legal behaviors.
  - 5. Human value and law is whatever the majority say it is. The state tells you right from wrong. It could be one thing today and something entirely opposite tomorrow. Whatever the majority wants sets our values and laws. There is no higher law.
- F. We see so much conflict today because people no longer have a common worldview. That is, we disagree about what is good, beautiful, and true. We disagree about what is best for the citizens of the US. We disagree regarding what human flourishing looks like. Many no longer even believe in those categories.
- G. A large segment of our nation supports perversion, pornography, abortion, gambling, gender confusion, and socialism. At least half of the country promotes the kind of behaviors that the Bible expressly condemns. People are elected to high office by promising to promote the Bible prohibits. Many today detest the values that our country was built on. It seems like only a minority of people today still uphold the founding values of America.

- H. The secular worldview seems to be dominating America and growing in influence. The leading voices in society are set on indoctrinating Americans in a secular point of view. It's all around us—media, education, sports, entertainment. It's no wonder that the younger generations easily adopt the leftist or progressive agenda—it's been pumped into them for years. Young people have been largely inoculated to Christian values.

In the wake of the events at the Capitol, Joe Biden said, "This is not who we are." Unfortunately, he is wrong about that. This is who we are. At least half, or a bit more, of the population of the US promotes the kinds of behaviors the Bible condemns. That is precisely who we are. And people like Joe Biden are directly responsible for that condition.

**Trans:** Ideas have consequences. Worldviews matter. Christians must continue to uphold and defend a biblical worldview even when the majority reject it.

III. God judges the nations.

*Psalms 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

*Ps 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*

*Isa 40:15 Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.*

- A. History is littered with the wreckage of great civilizations—the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans—they all rose and fell. Most of them retained their power for only a few centuries at best.
- B. America developed into a great nation largely because it laid a strong foundation in Christian morality and ethics. I believe that much of America's greatness was due to God's blessing on our land. Most of its citizens were professing Christians. For many years, basic ideas of Christian behavior were widely accepted by those in authority. Our leaders used to appeal to the Bible as a guiding light. Our people used to appeal to God to bless the nation. And, for many years, God was pleased to prosper America. It was far from perfect, but in many ways it was good.

As someone commented many years ago, “America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good, it will cease to be great.”

- C. As we all know, the moral atmosphere of America has radically shifted. Many in power today promote the very things Scripture condemns. They are in favor of breaking all of the 10 Commandments.
- D. Americans are now tearing down the monuments to the founders of our nation. What does that mean? It means that many have utterly rejected the founding principles of America. They don’t believe in freedom of religion, press, assembly, or speech. They don’t believe their rights come from God. They don’t believe in the rule of law. They don’t believe in limited government.
- E. A good example of this moral revolution just happened in Georgia. That state elected a self-identified Marxist as its new senator—Raphael Warnock. What agenda do you suppose he will promote? Do you think that he will promote and defend the constitution? Will he promote policies that will strengthen the nation? No, he’s a Marxist; he’ll work to overturn everything the country once stood for.
- F. The incoming regime has promised that it will promote and advance policies that are directly contradictory to biblical morality.

Joe Biden has said that the greatest human rights issue of our day is “transgender” rights. He will work to establish these so-called rights throughout the land.

1. One of the first things President Biden will do is sign into law the Equality Act, which will restrict freedom of speech and force the LGBT agenda on virtually everyone.
2. He wants to make abortion an absolute right with no restrictions. He wants to give the Roe vs. Wade decision the force of federal law.
3. He seems to be ready to push forward the agendas of organizations like Black Lives Matter. He’s on board with the Green New Deal. Policies to insure “racial justice” will quickly be put into place. Get ready to hear all about the importance of diversity, equality, and inclusion. Illegal immigrants will rush across the borders and be welcomed warmly.

4. If you disagree with these policies, you will be censored or worse. Dissent will not be allowed. Free speech will be a thing of the past.
- G. I expect that hate speech laws will soon be on the books, prohibiting Christians from publicly stating their views. Those in power will use recent events to justify suppressing the views of those they disagree with.
- H. For these reasons, I believe America is ripe for God's judgment. I don't know how or when God will judge our nation, but I believe it is coming, and it could be coming soon.

What could be the results of all of this? Fortunately, what *actually* happens is often not as bad as what *could* happen. I pray and hope that something will prevent full-scale madness. But, if the leftists get their way, here are a few things that likely will happen:

- ☹ They'll pack the Supreme Court and add a couple of states to the union to insure that their dominance continues. America will become much like California or New York, where only one party dominates. Those in power will stay in power; one party will rule from here on out. Free and fair elections will no longer occur.
- ☹ Christian education and home education will be eradicated. All children must be indoctrinated in the approved points of view. Accreditation will be based on acceptance of the government's policies. The government will allow only those points of view that it promotes. It will suppress all other views.
- ☹ The LGBT agenda will gain full acceptance in the culture. No criticism will be tolerated. Any speech criticizing the LGBT agenda or behaviors will be considered hate speech and will be penalized. Churches will be closed and pastors imprisoned for preaching what the Bible says about these issues.
- ☹ Diversity, equality, and inclusion will be mandated by the government. What will be most important is your race, your chosen gender, and your inclusion in a minority group. Merit and skill won't matter as much as race and viewpoint.
- ☹ We must believe men when they tell us they are really women. We must believe women when they tell us they are really men. We must allow children to determine their own gender. If a little boy happens to feel like a girl, we must allow him to be injected with hormones and to have surgery to modify his body. Parents will have no authority over their children in this regard. The state will take children away from parents who resist.

⊖ Abortion will be an absolute right for all women, for any reason, right up to the moment of birth. There will be no restrictions on the practice, and the government will fund the procedure for those who say they can't afford it.

That and much more will likely be on the agenda for 2021 and following. It may not turn out as badly as I envision, or it may be much worse.

What it all boils down to is the choice between Christ and chaos. People will tolerate chaos only temporarily. Eventually, society will submit to a tyrant who will promise safety and peace. Totalitarianism is the end result of a secular worldview. It's only when we choose Christ that we have freedom. As John Adams said, our constitution is fit only for a religious and moral people; it is wholly inadequate for any other.

Read Ps 37:1-11 – Recently heard a sermon on this text titled “Keep Calm and Carry On.” The words of the text are very appropriate for our situation.