

Cuomo's Non Mea Culpa

Proverbs 26:23 Silver Dross on Clay Pots

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The news swirl this last week contained Friday's news story about New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's news conference, in which he was supposed to address the COVID-19 efforts that his state was doing. But it devolved, especially at the end of his prepared comments and into the question and answer session, into Cuomo's *non mea culpa* in response to sexual harassment charges. Now six women have come forward with such charges. I guess you could say, "So much for the #MeToo movement brought on by the Left"—now they are after one of the Left's heroes.

These came on top of another serious accusation against Governor Cuomo: that he sent coronavirus patients, many of them old, to nursing homes to die. New York has the highest COVID-19 death rate of any state in the union. Actually, it's 256 people per 100,000, which is far and above any other state. It also has the second most total deaths, only second to California. New York's total deaths are about 50,000 over the year or so of coronavirus.

So, we could say that Governor Cuomo is in a tight spot. He has two criminal probes investigating these matters against him, and his policies have left much of the state and New York City in economic shambles. He let BLM and Antifa destroy the downtown areas of many of the larger cities, and they ravaged New York City. I saw some video last summer that showed the streets of New York looking like a ghost town. Were you would expect commerce, there was nothing. This is New York City we are talking about.

So, what does Governor Cuomo do? Well, he comes out swinging, of course. I listened to parts of his press conference and his tone was blunt and forceful. And here is a few of his comments:

I did not do what has been alleged, period. . . . Let the review proceed. I'm not going to resign. I was not elected by the politicians. I was elected by the people. Part of this is that I am not

part of the political club, and you know what? I'm proud of it. . . .
[L]ook, it's very simple. I never harassed anyone. I never abused anyone. I never assaulted anyone. And I never would, right? . . .
New Yorkers can make a decision once they have facts. You don't have facts now. You have allegations.

It reminded me very much of former President Bill Clinton's *non mea culpa* back in 1998 during the Monica Lewinsky scandal. But it was it was a New Yorker rather than Arkansan, and without the finger pointing and the raspy voice.

It also reminded me of a biblical proverb: Proverbs 26:23, if you will please go there. I want to spend the rest of my commentary on this particular verse:

Proverbs 26:23 Fervent lips with a wicked heart are like earthenware covered with silver dross.

In the *English Standard Version*, this is translated as,

Proverbs 26:23 (*English Standard Version*) Like the glaze covering an earthen vessel are fervent lips with an evil heart.

Very much the same. They flip things over a little bit, but the same idea. It is the Bible's equivalent of the idea of putting lipstick on a pig. You ever heard that expression? You can dress it up all you want, but a pig is still a pig.

Cuomo is technically right in the fact that what we are looking at right now are serious allegations. But the preponderance of public knowledge on both issues points to serious misuse of authority and unwelcome advances on these young women. Both are abuses of power. And if things go the way they seem to be going, the Democrats are trying to nail him to the wall on this. Just last night, I think it was, Chuck Schumer came out and said he should resign.

The illustration in the proverb might not be clear to us in modern times. Earthenware vessels are common, but not normally things we use daily. We do not give them a whole lot of thought. Earthenware is made exactly as the name is. It's made of earth. It's made of clay—ordinary, everyday, cheap

clay. We're not talking porcelain here, not like fine china, but clay pots, the kind that you would get from Home Depot or Lowe's and put a plant in. Those kind of clay pots. Such clay vessels would be for normal everyday use, and if broken, they could be easily and cheaply replaced.

Earthenware, even of the cheap variety, works best when glazed. But it would be foolish to use silver glaze on such pedestrian pots, cups, and plates. Such glaze, especially if it were silver, would certainly conceal the mean and cheap clay. It might make you think that it's more expensive than it actually is. But really, even if it were silver on a clay pot, it's just covering up what's inside, and that's dirt. You can look at that literally and figuratively.

That's the point of the proverb: Fervent or impassioned or excessive speech often hides vice rather than reveal it. Others hear the rhetoric of innocence that's coming out of the person's mouth, but it's just a screen to conceal the guilt underneath. Truth, if it were spoken, would expose the center of the crime. So, instead they weave a tapestry of lies to curtain off the evil inside—curtain it off from prying eyes, from investigating eyes, from even those who just want to know, those with curious minds.

But this is something that I should warn you is not just something that politicians do. This is something that every sinner does at one time or another. They use a bunch of words, perfectly spoken, in order to shield themselves from the guilt that's inside.

Another modern saw that comes to mind is, "How do you know a politician is lying? His lips are moving." It's getting to be this way all the time, that we can't trust anything a politician says. Our political offices seem to be brute-full of earthenware covered with silver dross. We need to be very wary of what they say. Don't get all bedazzled by their "silver dross" speech because it could be hiding something that they do not want you to see. It is far better to watch what they *do*, for in their deeds they exposed the truth underneath.

The Bible gives us its own commentary and explanation of this verse. I will just conclude with the in-Bible commentary here:

Proverbs 26:24-26 He who hates, disguises it with his lips, and lays up deceit within himself; when he speaks kindly, do not

believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart; though his hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness will be revealed before the [congregation].