

Watershed Moment

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I feel that the tragic murder of Charlie Kirk this past Wednesday was a watershed moment. It feels like a watershed moment in our history. A watershed moment is a significant event that marks a decisive turning point, and this turning point fundamentally changes the course of society or history. It is that time when something happens and things go differently from that point on.

His assassination has gripped the nation. Some have been in shock by it, expressed a lot of grief. There are people who are friends of his and supporters of his that reacted in great anger for what happened to him, you know, why take the life of a man who is so nice, so kind. The way he talked to people was not truly confrontational. He answered questions and he gave people things to think about that maybe they had learned in the classroom, because he mostly went to colleges and he was a counter force to the very liberal messaging that is going on there in our college campuses.

But on the other side of the spectrum, there are many who have reacted with well, let us just say, glee. They have made videos of themselves. I mean, I find that kind of shocking in itself that they actually filmed themselves being overjoyed at the murder of another person. They say things like that he deserved it. He was speaking hate. He was *not* speaking hate. He was speaking the truth as he understood it and he was trying to get people to stop pursuing a lifestyle, stop pursuing ideas that were going to lead to destruction and death. He believed that we are living in a culture of death and he was trying to persuade people to leave that course.

And so someone decided to kill him, to stop his voice. And we are waiting now to see how far this particular act of violence will tip the course of the nation one way or the other. I mean, we are only what, three days away from it right now, so we do not see exactly what is going to happen. But I have read commentators saying that they think this war, a civil war between the

left and the right, has stepped beyond the Cold War stage and now it is open hostility and violence. They predict at the very least a low level civil war. And it is not necessarily going to be a civil war between governmental entities, it is a civil war between people, between citizens and groups of citizens.

I do know one thing: that it marks the end of debate. Charlie is well known for saying that when discussions between opposing parties ends, violence begins. The two sides—call them the left and the right—are entrenched and neither side will budge. And so when that happens, the next step is sticks or knives or guns to stop the other person from saying what the one side feels is hateful or wrong. It is the next step for people who will not give up their beliefs even when they are shown logically, decisively that they are wrong, that they are illogical, that they are harmful and without any foundation whatsoever. That, if they follow what they are doing, they are going to end up dead. But the people who have those beliefs and lifestyles do not want to give them up. And so what we have is a digging in and firing shots literally at the enemy. Because they know that once this point has been reached, they cannot defeat them by any other means than the other person's death.

Now, that is all in the culture, all in society. My concern is for us. First, that we remain safe. We would be put on the right in this case, and right now the left is the one firing shots most prominently. And so there is a certain amount of fear that, you know, we will be shot at, or harmed in whatever way; this violence would come against us for believing in God because the other side is godless. But perhaps more importantly, the second thing I want to emphasize here is that we do not allow ourselves to follow the course of this world. That we do not become subsumed into the cultural and political flash flood that this event may cause. I do not want any of us being involved in the cultural backlash that will probably happen here in the next months as a result of this. Because we have not been called to follow the course of this world. We are called to stand against it as a counter cultural force that gets its orders from the One who sits on the throne.

So I am urging us to remain anchored in Christ and in His Word and in living godly in this world without following its controversial,

confrontational, and destructive course. I do want to read from Isaiah 59 because this is a point in our culture that we have reached, I believe. Let us read verses 1 through 4 and then drop down to verse 9.

Isaiah 59:1-4 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened [please believe that] that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue has muttered perversity. No one calls for justice, nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; they conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.

Now, of course, we have to remember that this is not necessarily spoken toward the church; this is toward Israel, but we have to look at it in terms of our place in spiritual Israel living within physical Israel.

Isaiah 59:9-15 Therefore justice is far from us, nor does righteousness overtake us; we look for light, but there is darkness! For brightness, but we walk in blackness! We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noonday as at twilight; we are as dead men in desolate places. We all growl like bears, and moan sadly like doves; we look for justice, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us. [Or deliverance could also be; for deliverance, but it is far from us.] For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us; for our transgressions are with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them: In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.

Isaiah here points out that sin, which separates us from God, leads to more sin and more separation from God. It just gets worse and worse and worse as we play out this line of sin. So in a sinful society like ours, which is far from

God, all you need to do is look out there, get on the Internet, and you will see how far from God they are. Violence and falsehood are rampant. It makes people blind, Isaiah says, lost, angry, depressed. They see widespread injustice. They see that few behave virtuously and truth takes a beating. It has been so abused, that is, truth, that Isaiah describes it like a person falling in the street, beaten down, bloody, wounded. Equity in a case like that, fairness, cannot enter a society like that. No matter what people say, they are not impartial. Everybody out there on both sides are doing all of their striving and yelling and arguing and beating up the other side for their own benefit.

Charlie, it seems, was one of those who you really felt like he was doing it out of kindness because he was a kind man and very happy and smiling all the time, never in any of his discussions it seems—I have not seen one—did he ever get angry at the other side or abusive. But they shot him.

So the final line is what is significant right now, there in verse 15, "He who departs from evil makes himself a prey." Truth is so rare now that people who try to do right, who try to speak truth, have a target on their back. They are the prey and the rest of the world, the sinful society around us, becomes a predator. People who follow the truth are so different from the world around them, and so good relatively, that they make people uncomfortable because they put them to shame. They make them feel guilty. So they lash out at them with fists, with knives, with guns.

My point here is that seeking truth is not without risk. We are hidden from the world in Christ, but that may not be the case as things get worse. It is going to take courage and conviction to follow God in a godless world. And maybe we have crossed that line now. I am no prophet. I do not know what is coming. But I do know that the Bible warns that evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse. And perilous conditions, wicked attitudes, and gross immorality will increase. It is right there in your Bible if you want to find those scriptures.

We may in time look back and see Charlie Kirk's murder as when the mystery of lawlessness, which we find in II Thessalonians 2, shifted into a higher gear. As individuals and as the Body of Christ, we God's people, God's elect, must make a corresponding shift. But we do not shift into the

world's way, we shift into devoting ourselves to living and thus witnessing the truth of God's Word. That is our calling.