

December 2016

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Prayer—Where Transformation Begins

What do recent election outcomes and other events of 2016 portend for the Church?

Because of the transgression of a land, many are its princes; But by a man of understanding and knowledge, Right will be prolonged. --Proverbs 25:19

It has been our practice to review at year's end, events and trends that we considered important to address in our monthly updates. That's what watchmen do. Whether our reports are prophetically significant is for the "body" to determine. But, here is what we witnessed:

January: The Washington State Human Rights Commission got a new idea, ruling that all male and female group locker rooms and bathrooms be opened to any who "identify" with the opposite sex—no questions asked. The new WAC 162-32 makes it illegal for schools and businesses with eight or more employees to bar a man from entering a women's restroom, locker room, shower or sauna. Even questioning an individual as to his or her sexual "identity" invites stiff penalties.

Albeit we were equally shocked at the number of local biblio-centric church leaders who thought it a waste of time for Christians to be concerned with such "political" matters. So, we reminded readers that a certain national leader in 1934 felt the same—saying (parenthetically) to a gathering of religious leaders at the Reich Chancellery, "You take care of the Church. Leave Germany to me!"

February: By all accounts, "The Donald," performed exceedingly well in the 11-state "Super Tuesday" presidential preference primary contest. Even the hubris of Mr. Trump's throw line "We're winning everywhere," was hard to dispute, especially as he racked up curious early endorsements from noteworthy religious figures, including Jerry Falwell, Jr., and Rev Robert Jeffress, et al. We noted that in a preceding prayer meeting with some 40 Pentecostal and Baptist leaders, the Lord was entreated to grant the candidate "wisdom, strength, and courage."

March: The Bernie Sanders campaign opened an office on Capitol Hill, home to Bernie's top three giving-per-capita ZIP codes in the Emerald City (and the nation). After capturing 73 percent of the delegates at the State Democrat Party caucuses, Sanders also managed to attract some 15,000-enthusiastic millennial-aged supporters to Safeco Field for a campaign rally. A *Reason-Rupe* survey indicates that 53 % of millennials view socialism favorably while only 16% can accurately define it.

April: We reviewed a preliminary white paper titled "Gender Ideology Harms Children." The American College of Pediatricians brief specifically urges educators and lawmakers to reject all policies, especially where children are concerned, that conditions one to accept as normal a life of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex.

The study points out that "Human sexuality is an objective biological binary trait: 'XY' and 'XX' are genetic markers of health—not markers of a disorder representing a third sex." But, what is obvious to even a child, and moreover, confirmed by modern scientific research and medical practice, sometimes isn't enough. Many there are, who willfully exchange the truth for a lie.

May: We introduced “Jaci,” a pastor’s wife who informed us she is a born-again believer, conservative in her political outlook, still shops at *Target*, and has stopped identifying with the *Republican Party*. According to her blog on “bathrooms,” which generated a million-plus hits, the political left feels the need to protect the transgendered community, and the right feels the need to protect their “values.” We suggested, however, that Jaci’s beef is with Jeremiah who had this to say about sitting on the moral sidelines:

“Also I have seen a horrible thing in the prophets of Jerusalem: They commit adultery and walk in lies; They also strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one turns back from his wickedness...” (Jeremiah 23:14).

June: With an eye to America’s birthday, we reported random on-the-street interviews suggesting that fewer than two-in-five persons can explain what the parades, picnics, and fireworks commemorate. Further, a poll of seniors in America’s top 55 colleges reveals that very few of our best educated, can identify what historic period either George Washington or Abraham Lincoln served in office. Scary?

July: Millions of prospective voters in both major political parties wished their presidential ideals could be congealed in persons other than the two semi-finalists. However, we strongly exhorted Christians to consider Nehemiah’s approach, exemplified in the ministry of Franklin Graham who came to Olympia on June 29th to PRAY. Thousands joined him, raising their voices heavenward, confessing individual and corporate sin, and calling out to God to grant unto us, leaders that we need—not leaders that we deserve.

August: Despite heightened interest in this year’s exceptional political “tabloid campaign,” nearly two-thirds of registered voters in the Evergreen State didn’t participate in the August 2 State Primary. Not to our surprise, our forecasts for state and legislative district outcomes in November were pinpoint accurate.

September: While U.S. presidential elections have become a watershed event in the eyes of the world, they are never an endgame for “believers.” Like Israel of old, when Christians lavish their affections on the temporal rather than the eternal, things fall apart. Point? Searching out principled leaders is worthwhile, but greater gain comes when the Church reflects Jesus, rather than the culture.

October: We discussed the weariness among voters, left and right, stemming from the unusually bitter discourse between this season’s two top-ballot candidates. It caused us to consider a 1998 Primary campaign we experienced in Washington’s 3rd congressional district when three competing Vancouver-area candidates “got saved” during the run-up. What an unusual contest that was!

November: To become “great again,” we asked if America’s clock should be moved forward or back. While the federal government has been delegated specific new powers on only 17 occasions since 1790, it has in recent decades, imposed perhaps thousands of non-franchised regulations upon the electorate. Our recommendation is that citizens should explore and exploit every opportunity to take back right ground.

We close year 2016 with observations from Evangelist Mario Murillo who was in the vanguard of the “JESUS” movement” on the UC-Berkley campus in the late 60s. Concerning the “against all odds” win by Donald Trump, Mario says “We have experienced a *stay* (a temporary reprieve), not a deliverance.”

While some liken Trump to King Cyrus, Mario cautions that “Indeed, Cyrus liberated the Jews, but after that he was not much help. Not only this, the Jews faced violent opposition from outside and complacency and corruption among their own. It took 80 years to be restored.”¹

But Mario says the Lord has given him a *word* that HE desires to transform HIS Church from a family that gathers weekly to be fed, to an army that goes out to destroy the works of the Devil.”

If we have experienced anything at all this year, it’s that transformation begins with *prayer*. KEEP PRAYING!

Rick Forcier

¹ mariomurilloministries.wordpress.com/page/2/