

How Will You Respond To Bullets Instead Of Ballots In 2024?

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

We realize that 2023 is just beginning and here we are, addressing a strong possibility of what could happen during the 2024 presidential election: bullets instead of ballots. Don't discount this too quickly. A huge number of people still believe "the 2020 election was stolen", and much of their leadership publicly affirms that lie—even with all the courts throughout the nation confirming there was no voter fraud. A large portion of the population is filled with distrust about the democratic process and even the validity of the Constitution. The stage is being set for intimidation and violence by those who feel "they were robbed" in 2020.

Already, bullying by the ultra-right and those with racist leanings is being reported in the news. Keep in mind this reality as things deteriorate: **The US is a post-Christian (*non-Christ influenced*) nation.** Many people may say they're "Christian", but their lives and attitudes and values don't reflect it. If you do genuinely follow Jesus as Lord of your life, you're in the extreme minority! It's a sure thing that fear and hatred will escalate unchecked in this land if there's no widespread repentance and turning to Jesus as Lord. Even Christians who may be the gentlest of souls now will find themselves promoting extreme views they couldn't conceive of having today. How desperately the US needs the salvation that only our Lord Jesus offers!

- **Politics is nothing more than humans who are deluded into believing they're in control.**

- **Religion is humanity telling God they'll believe in Him—BUT they reserve the right to tell Him the kind of god they want Him to be, especially a deity that doesn't interfere with their lives.**

Take an honest look at yourself and at those close to you:

- Do people identify you more by your political persuasion or "church" affiliation than they do by your commitment to our Lord Jesus and reflecting His love, forgiveness and compassion for others?
- Are you more comfortable telling others about the political party or candidate you favor than you are in identifying yourself as a beloved servant of our Lord Jesus?

We've previously cited this self-evaluation test: Whatever comes out of your mouth first **or** you talk about most often indicates your values and priorities. Ask your family and friends what YOU bring up first or talk about the most. (Don't argue with them about their answer!) As our Lord says, *"out of the abundance of the heart [a person's] mouth speaks"* (Luke 6:45).

- If you claim to belong to our Lord Jesus but you can't speak about your relationship with Him and your service in Him with exuberance and gratitude, don't you think you have a major problem of denying Him as having any value to you? (See Matthew 10:32,33.)
- And if Jesus doesn't have any crucial relevance to your way of life apart from what you read about Him in the Bible, don't you think you have a major problem of denying Him? (See Matthew 10:32,33.)

Be Very Careful: Your Sin Nature and/or Undemolished Demonic Strongholds Can Deceive You Into **Plausible Deniability**

Be on guard against **plausible deniability** deceiving you that you're not guilty of committing the sin of denying our Lord Jesus. Whenever you heed your **sin nature** and/or **demonic voices** within strongholds which sound just like the voice of your own mind, you snuff out the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit. ONLY the Spirit can prevent you from giving way to plausible deniability. So be alert and diligent in learning to listen and obey His voice first.

FYI: For decades we've met very few parents (and grandparents) among the religiously-mired who actively serve our Lord Jesus in their daily lives. Having tolerated years of **unconfessed sin** and **undemolished strongholds** in their own lives, they've raised their offspring to live likewise—pursuing all the values and goals and material security they can get from this world. They are training their generations to live duped by plausible deniability. Maybe YOU are one of these parents, or the progeny of parents who encouraged you to pursue the world's ways while ignoring or minimizing Lord Jesus in your life. In either case, only your **repentance** – you turning away from your sinful ways and turning to the way our Lord Jesus

What Do Believers And Demons Have In Common?



"You believe that there is one God. Good!
The demons believe it too..." (James 2:19).



***There's gotta be a bigger difference for those
who belong to Jesus as their Lord!!!***

would have you live — can deliver you from living deceived in plausible deniability.

The odds are that your faith community is also plagued by plausible deniability. Is your leadership ensuring at each service that everyone has the opportunity to be free of unconfessed sin or strongholds so that you're a **gathering of righteousness**? If not, then you have eliminated the holy and awesome presence of our Lord Jesus from your midst. Several times over the years as we've attended services at different congregations, the Holy Spirit would tell Mike to get on his knees. Then He would tell Mike that our heavenly Father refused to hear their worship. Their worship wasn't going beyond the ceiling because of the sins that the people were tolerating! How far is your worship going?

It's time for you to make sure that you, your family, and everyone in your faith community are cleansed from ALL unrighteousness:

*"If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But **if** we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another; and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. **If** we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. **If** we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. **If** we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word is not in us" (1John 1:6-10).*

"Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what He commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zephaniah 2:3; also Isaiah 57:15;66:2).

"If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all" (Isaiah 7:9).

Humility and contriteness (sorrow and regret for having sinned) go a long way with our heavenly Father: *"These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at My word"* (Isaiah 66:2b; see also James 4:6). Humility and contriteness allow you to view yourself, your family and your faith community with our Lord Jesus's view of you. Most importantly, with humility and contriteness you're able to completely trust Him as you **take a stand for Him**. Taking a stand for our Lord Jesus is not optional for those who belong to Him — and He gives His followers many opportunities to stand for Him!

The Older Testament offers many instances in which people took a stand for God, and He stood with them (see the Book of Judges, for example). Our favorite account is that of David, the man after our Lord's own heart: *"David said to [Goliath], 'You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the Name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied'"* (1Samuel 17:45; see also Hebrews 10:32-39). When David faced Goliath, the shepherd boy could have thrown the rock in the opposite direction and God would have made sure it hit the giant. Why? David took a stand for God!



"Fearing human beings is a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe"
(Proverbs 29:25)

Please, don't try to get away with anything less than the trust of Abraham or David by allowing your sin nature to cover your cowardice with **plausible deniability**. You must face the dread likelihood that this nation is on the eve of its own destruction. We have collectively evicted our Lord Jesus by our tolerated sin and our exaltation of God-denying Humanism. Christians collectively have hidden behind plausible deniability and refused to stand up for Him so that He would stand with us. Start 2023 this way: Take on the grace of humility and contriteness by repenting and confessing your sins and living in the righteous courage those actions produce. In 2024, *"perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD'S anger."*

If you don't stand up for our Lord Jesus so that He will show Himself strong by standing with you, what will you say to Him at the Judgment Throne? Have you used your voice to stand up in Christ's love to confront a brother or sister who is sinning, or to take a stand against racism and any other forms of injustice? If you haven't, what will you tell Jesus? "I was a coward." "I feared being rejected or mocked." "I didn't care about those who were facing injustice as long as it wasn't me." **If** we who belong to our Lord Jesus don't stand up for Him and the commands and promises in His Word, how will we face Him when He comes for us?

Over the years we've mentioned certain garments we wear and our vehicle signs that express our identity with our Lord Jesus. We aren't doing this to peddle our Lord Jesus to the public, but rather to publicly identify ourselves with Him. We've encountered many Christians who do good things for others, BUT they never fully identify themselves with Him so that HE is praised rather than themselves. Prayerfully consider the line of demarcation our Lord makes for His own in regard to their public identification with Him:

"Whoever acknowledges Me in the presence of others I will also acknowledge in the presence of My Father in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father Who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32,33 ; see also 2Timothy 2:11-13; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2Peter 2:20-22).

Many years ago the Holy Spirit convicted us to publicly acknowledge that we belong to our Lord Jesus. Not only do our words and actions proclaim that He is the Lord we love and serve. Our attire and our vehicle announce it too! (See pics on the next page.) And how often as we walk or drive by, a follower of Jesus comes toward us with encouragement or someone in another car gives a big grin and a thumbs up! We don't see ourselves "advertising" Jesus. Rather, we are publicly acknowledging His loving reality in our lives that's emanating from living under the Lordship of Jesus.

When you look at the photos, though, joyful identification with Jesus might not be your first thought. Do the pictures instead inspire apprehension in you about being so public about your own faith? Or has the unspoken thought which many have had cross your mind, "I'm glad Mike and Sue are so obvious in their trust in Jesus, but that's not me!" We strongly encourage you to do this: Ask the Holy Spirit if your fear and apprehension are, in fact, you denying our Lord by your silence about Him? Are you caving in to your sin nature by allowing it to provide you with plausible deniability? Our Lord assures us that **"the righteous are as bold as a lion"** (Proverbs 28:1; see also 1John 1:6-10). Are you?

If you cower about publicly identifying yourself with our Lord Jesus (or find that you instead use a generic "God" when you refer to your beliefs), what unconfessed sin(s)/undemolished stronghold(s) are keeping you from the boldness of being identified as belonging to Jesus? We aren't saying that you need to wear clothing with a message or put a sign on your vehicle. But we are exhorting you to seek the Holy Spirit for an answer: Are you hiding in fear and apprehension about fully identifying with your Lord Jesus?

Can you imagine the effect *if just one faith community in your city or town had signs on their vehicles like the two on the bottom of the next page (and drove accordingly!)? Publicly identifying with Lord Jesus as His own sheep personifies the righteous standing for Him when their hearts are motivated by His love! And based on the many examples in Scripture, what do you think He will do to orchestrate all sorts of divine opportunities when you make His relationship with you public? We've joyfully experienced His intervention many, many times!*



Belonging to Jesus is to show



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His forgiveness
& His compassion
for others.**

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