**A Letter of Exhortation for the Church – A Call** **to Action!**

By Karin Miller, 9/7/23

**“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities of evil**

**who are at work in this present age.” (Ephesians 6:12).**

**“I know your tribulation…” Revelations 2:9.**

Christians of Minnesota, we are truly in a spiritual war between good and evil! We see it in the battles that play out in our school board meetings where policies are set, inside our classrooms where ideologies are taught, and in the State House and Senate chambers where laws are passed.

The frontline of this battle is *OUTSIDE* the four walls of the church – within the commerce of society. This is the place of “thlipsis” where Christians need to engage and stand for God’s truth!

Thlipsis, pronounced “thu-leep-sis,” is the Greek word for tribulation or affliction in Revelations 2:9. It means a pressure or a pressing together. It is a tangible sense of the clash in the spiritual realm between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Man. “It is a warring of vision and values between the Church and Culture.”1 It is that place where Christians feel the pressure from the world to conform to its truth, but where we must rise up to STAND on God’s Truth, declare God’s Truth, and live God’s Truth!

***“Thlipsis is the afflictions of those hard pressed by siege and the calamities of WAR.”*** *1*

Yes, war! Church of Jesus Christ, it is time for us all to wake up and realize that we ARE at WAR! Our culture is immersed in a massive spiritual battle of ideologies that are exalting themselves against the knowledge and truth of God! (II Corinthians 10:4-5).

***This letter is a call to action for EVERY Christian to engage in the Battle!***

*Step out on the frontlines and Step into Thlipsis! To take a STAND for the TRUTH of God in your every sphere of influence!*

Unfortunately, the frontline of this spiritual battle is advancing rapidly in our State.

***“The enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy.***

***But I came that you might have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10***

In Minnesota, the enemy is working overtime to kill and destroy children at every turn. On January 3rd, the 2023 legislative session began with an attack against unborn children by legalizing completely unlimited abortion (even for minors) right up to the moment of birth.2 On it’s heels came an attack on children’s gender and their God-given identity in the “gender affirming care” act, which allows individuals of any age to use gender destroying drugs or surgeries.3 On May 22nd, the session ended with a health omnibus bill that stripped away a baby’s right to receive life-preserving care *AFTER* birth!4 …

Never before have I experienced such tangible sense of thlipsis and spiritual warfare as when I rallied with a small crowd of Christians outside the Minnesotan House and Senate chambers when they were to vote on these bills. We were surrounded by people who were mocking our hymns and prayers and passionately chanting in favor of these bills that will literally murder babies and mutilate children’s bodies. Though we were outnumbered, we held our ground by faith, but we couldn’t help but wonder:

**Where is the *Church*!?** … ***Where are all the Christians?...***

The Capitol should have been overflowing with Christians that day….but it wasn’t.

**In Minnesota, 35 babies are aborted every day.**That is well over **12,000 babies killed per year**. And this number is rapidly rising! People are flocking to Minnesota which has now become known as an abortion and trans sanctuary state.

Though we might not see it, babies are being killed and children’s bodies are being chemically or surgically mutilated right beneath our noses EVERY single day! Most of us are either unaware or too preoccupied with our comfortable lives, just like the Priest and the Levite who continued past the man crumpled on the side of the road who had been robbed, stripped, and beaten (Luke 10: 29-37).

Just like during WWII – when the German church heard the cries of the Jewish people being transported past them in cattle cars to concentration camps – the Church of America has a choice to make:

***Will we sing our hymns a little louder – OR – Will we take ACTION!?***

***Will we capitulate to the culture – OR – Will we take a stand for truth and righteousness!?***

In Germany, out of 18,000 churches, 3,000 took a stand against the Nazi mistreatment of Jews. Dietrich Bonhoffer’s congregation was one of them. 3,000 Churches capitulated to the Nazis, while 12,000 congregations did *NOTHING*. The 12,000 congregations caught in the middle were dismayed by the mistreatment of the Jews but were afraid to take a stand. Because only a minority of Pastors and Christians objected, the Nazis were able to subdue their resistance, and many like Bonhoffer became martyrs. (A Letter to the American Church, by Eric Metaxas, p. 45).

However, if even half of the hesitant 12,000 had joined the bold ranks of the 3,000, so that the majority of the Church took a stand against the Nazis, they could have prevented the Holocaust.

**We the people have the power, but the MAJORITY must take a stand!**

As in Nazi Germany, so also in Minnesota, USA – **the CHURCH can make the difference!!!**

So Church of Minnesota, what’s it going to be?! In the wake of the life-destroying legislation that just passed, are we going to just shake our heads in dismay, throw our hands up in despair, and do NOTHING?! Are we just going to capitulate and go on singing through our daily routines? -- OR -- Will we take ACTION to push back against these evil agendas and to bring the Gospel to the ones who are being targeted? Will we take action to defend the lives of the unborn and even school-aged children from the lies and destruction the enemy has unleashed against them?

***We are at a historic crossroads!***

***In the face of historic evil is an opportunity for historic righteousness!***

**Minnesota is now heralded as an abortion and a trans refuge state.5**

Church, what do you say to this? How will you respond? We have the opportunity to be an example to the watching world, to our nation, of how the people of God will respond, how the people of God will rise up!

The People of God will not compromise. We will not bow. We will stand for and on God’s truth and work sacrificially to bring the Gospel and the love of Jesus to those who are being targeted, who are becoming the casualties in this war: especially the unborn, children, minors, vulnerable women, the nuclear family, etc.

Does the Church in Minnesota only have a façade of religion, or do we have a true, living active faith in a risen, powerful Savior!?

***Are we living like our faith in Jesus is REAL!?***

**Let future generations look back to see a Church that went on offense with the truth of the Gospel!** Let them see a church that resisted, pushed back, and STOOD up for GOD’s TRUTH! Let them see a Church that sacrificially gave of their time, money and resources to save unborn babies, surrounded pregnant mothers with such support that abortion wasn’t even a thought, and brought God’s truth about gender to children in public schools.

Church, the rapidly declining circumstances in our state *ARE* a call to *ACTION*!

***Inaction in the face of sin IS sin!!***

***Faith without works IS dead. James 2:14-17.***

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead.” James 2:14-17.

What good is it, Christian, if we merely attend Bible studies and prayer breakfasts, eating eggs and discussing the Bible in our comfortable homes and churches, asking God to save babies' lives while we do NOTHING about it!?

**Christian, realize that YOU are God’s hands and feet!**

We might pray, but God answers those prayers through us! “God hears our prayers, but He moves through our actions.” Kirk Cameron. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who is willing to lay down His life for His Sheep. Are you willing to lay down your life (time and money) to stand for God’s Truth and to share God’s truth to the lost as Christ’s ambassador?!

For example, when you pray to God about abortion, asking Him to save babies and surround pregnant women with support, have you paused to consider:

**How could YOU take ACTION to be the ANSWER to that prayer?!**

Could you volunteer or donate to your local crisis pregnancy center? Could you walk and pray in the annual March for Life on January 22nd, 2024 6? Could you become a sidewalk counselor or prayer support outside your local abortion clinic7? Could you personally help support and encourage a single mom?

Another example: Are you concerned about what children are being taught in public schools today? Do you long and pray for every child to have an opportunity to hear the Gospel?

**How could YOU take ACTION to be the ANSWER to that prayer?!**

Pray about adopting a local public school and host a Bible-based club there! Child Evangelism Fellowship’s Good News Clubs, Bible -2-School, Campus Faith Clubs, and Young Life groups are all possibilities. Just think: wouldn’t it be awesome to link arms and efforts with Christians in your community so that *EVERY CHILD* across our state has access to the Gospel, to Biblical truth, and Holy Spirit filled believers at least once a week?

Finally, Are you concerned about the anti-biblical direction our state is going in, and are you praying for God to raise up godly leaders and elect them to office? Have you considered:

**How could YOU take ACTION to be the ANSWER to that prayer?!**

First of all, do you VOTE? Elections have consequences. All the laws passed in Minnesota this year happened because of the loss of the one Senate Seat by *only 321 votes*.

***YOUR VOTE MATTERS!***

Do you know that only 50% of Christians are registered to vote? Of those who are registered, only 50% actually do vote. Of those who vote, only 50% vote on biblical principles. If you’re keeping track of the math, that is only 12.5%!

Just think of the impact if 100% of Christians registered to vote, researched the candidates and the issues, then applied biblical truth to their decision and actually VOTED!...

***The CHURCH could make ALL the Difference!***

*Jesus Christ is waiting to answer our prayers and move in our State*

*through you and I – through His Body!*

If we as Christians take action to live out our faith in the social and political sphere, we could stem the tide of evil that seeks to overtake and destroy our children and our state!!!

So find local candidates who will stand on biblical values and support them! If there are none, consider running yourself! If you cannot run, support someone who can! You can door-knock with candidates in your neighborhood, walk in a parade, put their sign in your yard, give them a financial donation, and promote him or her with your neighbors and friends and through your social media.

Beyond this, do you reach out to your elected officials to hold them accountable? After all, they work for us. It’s your votes that elect them and your tax dollars that pay them. They need to hear from you! And they need your prayers! Here’s a link to find out who represents you and how to contact them: [LCC-GIS (mn.gov)](https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/)

In America, We the People have the great privilege, the opportunity, and the responsibility to make the government what WE want it to be!! We are at this point in our state largely because we as Christians have abdicated this responsibility.

***It is time for Christians to RE-ENGAGE!***

*Above all – no matter your sphere of influence –*

*God has put YOU, Believer, in Minnesota for such a time as this!!*

In **John 10**, Jesus is the **Good Shepherd** who is willing to lay down his life for his sheep. Are you like the hired hand who flees when the wolf comes, or are you willing to lay down your life as an ambassador of the Good Shepherd to **call out the Wolf** and **go after the Lost Sheep?**

***Believer, God has put you in Minnesota for such a time as this!***

We do NOT shut our eyes to the evil and destruction running rampant before us! We do NOT fear! (2 Timothy 1:7). We do NOT dismay! (Joshua 1:9). We do NOT shrink back! (Hebrews 10:29)

***“We do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed,***

***but to those who have faith and are saved.” Hebrews 10:39***

We advance with the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18), wielding the Sword of the Spirit (Hebrews 4:12), bringing the Truth of God into every sphere! In the Name and the Authority of Jesus Christ!! (1 Timothy 6:15) To the Glory of God!! AMEN!

**So what has God put on your heart to pray about today?**

**How could YOU take ACTION to be the ANSWER to that prayer?!**

***Faith without ACTION is dead! What action are you taking today?!***

Sources:

1. Pastor Troy Dobbs – Grace Church Sermon on 9/3/23 -- [Enduring Tribulation | Sermons | Grace Church](https://grace.church/sermon/enduring-tribulation/)
2. HF1 -- “Protect Reproductive Options” Act – [H.F. 1 (mn.gov)](https://www.house.mn.gov/hrd/bs/93/HF0001.pdf). [HF 1 as introduced - 93rd Legislature (2023 - 2024) (mn.gov)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=HF0001&session=ls93&version=list&session_number=0&session_year=2023)
3. HF146 – “Gender Affirming Care” Bill -- [H.F. 146 (mn.gov)](https://www.house.mn.gov/hrd/bs/93/HF0146.pdf). [HF 146 1st Engrossment - 93rd Legislature (2023 - 2024) (mn.gov)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=HF0146&session=ls93&version=list&session_number=0&session_year=2023)
4. SF2995 – Health Omnibus Bill – [SF 2995 4th Engrossment - 93rd Legislature (2023 - 2024) (mn.gov)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=SF2995&version=latest&session=ls93&session_year=2023&session_number=0) – Born Alive Infant Protection Removed Lines: Article 4, Section 56, Lines 217.24--217.30. [Chapter 70 Summary.pdf (senate.mn)](https://assets.senate.mn/summ/chapter/2023/0/Chapter%2070%20Summary.pdf)
5. [Minnesota, Washington become 'havens' for abortion, child 'gender transitions' - Alpha News](https://alphanews.org/minnesota-washington-become-havens-for-abortion-child-gender-transitions/)
6. **March for Life** – Minnesota State Capitol 12 noon – 1 p.m. – January 22, 2024 -- [March for Life | Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (mccl.org)](https://www.mccl.org/march). We need 12,000 people to come to help us commemorate and present a baby model representing each of the 12,000 lives lost to abortion in Minnesota each year on the steps of the St. Paul State Capitol! Please commit yourself to come and participate. Invite two friends to join you! Watch the MCCL link for further updates.
7. Pro-Life Action Ministries – [www.plam.org](http://www.plam.org)