

Protestants Should Protest Kagan

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Devout Christians of all denominations and races are in danger of experiencing what blacks in the late 1960s and early 1970s called “institutional racism” or “institutional discrimination.” Blacks of that era saw that there was a pervasive attitude that prevented black achievement among the national leadership, who ran many of our nation’s most influential institutions. Civil rights laws had been enacted but the effect of those laws was nullified by the personal prejudices of high-ranking gatekeepers - everyone from judges to CEOs, policeman to professors, and other individuals who exercised personal power over our lives.

Many evangelicals and other Protestants felt like they woke up and discovered they were suddenly deemed the “bad guys” by many segments of our society. The cultural swing by a militant anti-faith minority is certainly not Elena Kagan or President Obama’s fault. Nonetheless, the composition of America’s highest court will determine our national spirit, values, and destiny. Therefore, the faith of the prospective judicial candidate matters.

In a misguided quest for justice, many have begun to wage an ideological war against a group they have labeled the religious right. Out of fear, these factions discriminate against people of living faith. Their fear, however, has to do with a desire to impose their values on the rest of the nation. Their argument is that there must be a separation of church and state. “After all,” they reason, “America has changed dramatically since its inception.” What many of us forget is that the American dream was based on concepts and values compatible with biblical faith and religious freedom of all people. The truth is that our nation must choose to retain or reject this cornerstone of our freedom. The operative word is “choose.”

The famed Alex de Tocqueville reported, “The Americans combine the notions of religion and liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive of one without the other.” Although the quote comes from nearly 200 years ago, it records the energy from which America rose to greatness. Tocqueville felt that our morality and faith was the platform upon which our freedoms and our accomplishments were built. I’m sure he would not have envisioned a time in which those core values would be challenged by a kind of cultural cancer called “religious intolerance.”

Over the last few years, we have called the ideological struggle for power “culture wars.” Unfortunately, the nation is rapidly approaching a defining moment in our history. The war for the courts is only one front in this battle. One need only watch recent movies, HBO specials, and new non-fiction best sellers to determine that there are many groups taking shots at biblical Christianity.

Ricky Gervais, award-winning English actor, teamed up with superstar Jennifer Garner to star in the movie *Invention of Lying*. This 2010 movie presented biblical Christianity as the biggest lie that Mark, the movie's leading character, ever told. Complete with his version of the 10 Commandments written on the

back of Pizza Hut boxes, Mark articulated a fatalistic view of God that made Him the author of all the sickness, pain, and personal destruction in the world. This PG-13 work is aimed at convincing a younger generation that Christianity is not the way. The work is not comedy - it's cultural indoctrination.

Similarly, Bill Maher's 2008 documentary "Religulous" marked an all-time low in the documentary world. In a vendetta-like spirit, Maher attacked Christians of all denominations and other faiths. In 2009 an interesting twist was added to the work's promotion. The movie "W," starring Josh Brolin, was added to this packet. The movie carried an attack on George W. Bush's faith, intelligence, and his conservative, political point of view.

Finally, there have been at least two major books that I am aware of that have reached the top of the New York Times bestseller's list in the last few years which are simply celebrations of atheism: Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and Christopher Hitchens' *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*.

Against the backdrop of the religious mis-education of the nation, evangelical Christians must embrace (once and for all) that they must let their voices be heard in politics, the arts, and every arena of our culture. Although Catholics are well represented on the Supreme Court, there will likely be important cases that will need the insight of unbiased evangelicals to create an atmosphere for true justice. Failure of the faith community to engage in the world of politics and processes like the selection of judges could hurt the Christian community decades from now.

Protestants must take action today! We should return to the foundations that have made the US great. Further, we must not just act on behalf of our needs, alone. We must lead the country back to the safety of its guiding principles. At the same time, despite our personal views, we must act on behalf of the entire American family – religious and secular alike. Further, we must continue to encourage religious diversity and even atheists to remain true to their beliefs as it relates to the political process. The repression of minority points of view is un-American and petty.

Therefore, let your senators know that you want them to stand up for the rights of the American faith community. Specifically, your senators must be urged to stand against the appointment of Elena Kagan. A failure to act at this critical juncture will be tantamount to surrendering to the enemies of faith and personal freedom.