

## Reflecting on reflection

Cell phones are wonderful; to the extent that if you are not in the mood to do some serious work, they provide distractions; easy excuses to do something other than that which you must do. Such is the case for me yesterday.

I received the notification that I had received a social media update. In this case it was from *Youtube*. Specifically, it highlighted a 2017 Tedx talk by Cassie Jaye, a young woman, self-proclaimed feminist, who shared her experience while producing a documentary on the Men's rights movement. In the talk she shared how she recognized her own feminine bias and how they blinded her to real issues facing men and women in society. I stopped and watched. To say the least it was refreshing. No, not that there were conversions or heavenly choirs singing 'Halleluiah.' The refreshment came in the fact that she saw the weaknesses of her own ideals, questioned them, and learned the story and trials of individuals she previously saw (as she put it) as the enemy. Her reflections gave her a greater awareness of other's thoughts and ideals. That's what reflections can do for us.

Add to this, yesterday also produced confirmation that today's society suffers from an inability to actively reflect and learn. This self-indulgent bias is leading us into a divisive quagmire – unreconciling blindness to ideas which will destroy us.

Here's the confirming case:

It's no secret that there is a growing threat by some governmental and business authorities to force individuals to act counter to their will. An RN used Facebook to tell her story. According to her post she has worked long tiring shifts (my words not hers) throughout the COVID 19 pandemic. To all but the most casual observer many would call her a "hero." I thank her. Now despite working on the front lines of this health issue for more than eighteen months effectively using the typical and presumed safety protocols; she stated that she was being terminated from her job because she questions health related issues of the vaccine being offered.

This is not to mention the idea 'vaccine passports' being touted by some governmental officials as the best way forward to keep everyone safe from the spread of the virus. Despite the fact that many of these same politicians touted, while supporting other divisive public health policies, that medical decisions should be made between the doctor and the patient only and the government should not stick its nose into the middle of personal decisions. Also challenging the dominant narrative is the fact that while some COVID-19 vaccines are approved for use in public, none are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Individuals who work in the restaurant, medical, governmental, and other private businesses are being forced to receive the vaccine over private objections with the consequence being they must join the unemployment lines.

We have reached the point where Universities are banning unvaccinated individuals from on-line classes. Despite the impossibility of an on-line student spreading the virus, schools are banning them from viral classrooms. If this is legitimate, then most every school system in the United States is needlessly implementing such learning all grades K through 12. Take a moment to consider the draconian nature of such a ban.

Back to reflections:

With the influx of authoritative demands on the public to accept the vaccine, a poem published in 1946 by the Rev. Martin Niemoller, regarding the German governments growing categories of individuals persecuted by the Nazi's, came to mind. Here is my Facebook post Niemoller's original ode is noted with my thoughts in 2021:

Just a thought

- (1940s) First they came for the Communists, And I did not speak out;  
because I was not a Communist
- (2021) First they said Everyone MUST receive the COVID 19 vaccine;  
but I didn't fear the vaccine, so I said nothing
- (1940s) Then they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out  
because I was not a Socialist
- (2021) Then they demanded all medical workers receive the vaccine;  
but I'm not a LPN, RN or Dr., so I said nothing.
- (1940s) Then they came for the trade unionists; And I did not speak out;  
because I was not a trade unionist
- (2021) Then the demanded all restaurant workers receive the vaccine;  
but I don't work in a restaurant, so I said nothing.
- (1940s) Then they came for the Jews; And I did not speak out;  
because I was not a Jew
- (2021) Then they demanded those no matter their circumstance  
receive the COVID 19 vaccination; but I remained silent
- (1940s) Then they came for me; And there was no one left  
To speak out for me
- (2021) Then they came for me; And there was no one left to speak out for me.

Before you disregard this post as alarmist, remember, the policies put forth cited by The Rev. Martin Niemoller in 1946 were touted to be for the national "good."

PLEASE PRAY THAT ALL WHO INFLUCENCE  
GOVERNMENTAL POLICY WILL HAVE AND USE WISDOM  
AND DISCERNMENT.

It was NOT an anti vax post. I myself have received the vaccine because I wanted to receive it. The post purposefully highlighted the decisions made by political leaders today considering the policies of the Nazi party in 1930's and 40's Germany.

The Facebook "fact checkers" failed in their review – they failed to reflect on my meaning. They missed the point. How do I know this? Because every subsequent comment or shared post to this parallel has received an attachment from Facebook saying; "COVID-19 vaccines go through many tests for safety and effectiveness and are then monitored closely. Source: World Health Organization." The available link then offers a litany of benefits of the vaccine. I point to the final line of the post: we must pray for policy decision makers that God will endow them with wisdom and discernment. That was my point!

It is a call for people to reflect on the impacts of decisions. History does repeat itself, especially when society fails to implement lessons learned. To do this requires us all to reflect on our own beliefs, biases, and the events that form our lives. Our failure to engage in such reflection will only result in repeated errors some of which could be catastrophic.

I made no negative statement about the vaccine – my knowledge of how such vaccines work is way to limited to justify any attempts by myself to competently evaluate its safety or effectiveness. My point here is that the "fact checkers" who work for Facebook failed to understand the point of the post. In their apparent haste to promote the goodness of the approved vaccine and push their own narrative, they failed to reflect on its content and so they missed the core point of the post. It is this apparent deliberate failure to think about the true message of the messenger and show that they are parties to the real pandemic in our society.

Yes, we are in the midst of a pandemic today, one that is more serious than COVID-19; the disease being spread is not biological; it is spiritual. Our social norms have jettisoned common sense reflection in favor of the easy path of influence; we discount lessons learned from past events so that we can appear right in our own eyes. We ignore any other ideas which are counter to our own opinions and thus blindly tout our unsubstantiated opinions.

The only vaccine for this pandemic is the blood of Jesus Christ which he shed for all on the Cross. It can only be administered to our hearts through reflection, recognition, and repentance. Reflecting on how sinful we are when left to our own self-righteous desires; recognition of our sinful bents; and repentance of these.

Cassie Jaye saw her heart and learned. I hope and pray that more of us can do the same. Reflection is the only way to start this journey and continue society on the road to a better more harmonious, God-fearing future.