

The Playbook

Politicked - Part 2

June 9, 2024

Part 1: Are you filtering your faith through your politics or are you filtering your politics through your faith? Which is truly first?

1st Century A.D.

Christians were being:

- **Socially and financially ostracized**
 - **Fired from jobs**
 - **Denied access to work or trade**
 - **Publicly shamed**
 - **Disowned by family**
- **Denied legal rights and protections**
 - **Denied due process and fair trials**
 - **Threatened with laws that violated their faith or face arrest, persecution, and even execution**
 - **Homes and property seized**
 - **Church buildings destroyed**
- **Imprisoned and enslaved**
- **Tortured**
 - **Whipped and beaten**
 - **Publicly tortured, sometimes for entertainment**
- **Executed and martyred**
 - **Burned alive**
 - **Forced into the elements to suffer and die slowly**
 - **Nailed to crosses like Jesus**

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! ¹⁷Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, 'I will take revenge; I will pay them back,' says the Lord. ²⁰Instead, 'If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.' ²¹Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. ¹Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ²So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. ... ⁶Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. ⁷Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them,

*and give respect and honor to those who are in authority. ⁸Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to **agapē** one another. If you agapē your neighbor, you will **fulfill** the requirements of God’s law. ⁹For the commandments say, ‘You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet.’ These—and other such commandments—are **summed up in this one** commandment: ‘Agapē your neighbor as yourself.’ ¹⁰Agapē does no wrong to others, so **agapē fulfills the requirements of God’s law.**”*
Romans 12:14-13:1-2, 6-10 (NLT)

Jesus’ playbook is agapē love!

Jesus doesn’t command non-resistance. He commands active benevolence. We don’t destroy our enemies by violence but win them by love.

When Jesus “lost” on the cross, He ended up “winning” for all humanity.

Because of how Christians **loved, the culture that was attacking Christianity ended up turning to Christianity and embracing Jesus. Let’s do that again.**

You were Jesus’ enemy and He responded with the cross. Now go and do likewise.