Twitter Thread by ElizabethGlassTurner



ElizabethGlassTurner
@BittyMoment

I don't always like that freedoms are enshrined in process; checks & balances. It's not perfect; sometimes those processes are used to oppress (voting in the South). The principle though is freedom that goes through process prevents passions of mobs (yesterday's domestic terror)

Can process be misused? Yes, absolutely, thus the need for well-informed voters/participants in civic life. But are the people who attacked the Capitol oppressed by misused process? Even many other Republicans say, no; by end of day that number had grown.

Their sense of grievance is real - and preyed upon. For other circumstances in their lives it's possible sense of grievance is justified; rust belt poverty is brutal for instance. But feeling wronged & being wronged are different.

There isn't evidence of the will of the people being suppressed in this election. It is a nauseating twist to witness, that a group of people carrying Confederate flags into the Capitol building claim oppression by broken process.

In the C-Span livestream & photos yesterday, & the footage that emerged shortly after, it was apparent the crowd was a mix of near-tourist rural supporters, known white supremacists, & militia-like aggressors. At least 1 of those groups isn't interested in sharing fair process.

I'm sure someone has made this observation better than I am now: leaders who foment & prey on a sense of grievance - esp grievance against historically oppressed people - commit atrocity against neighborly goodwill, the fabric of common good, & the goals of this nation.

It is evil to pit grief against grief, hardship against hardship, lament against lament, especially when one group has suffered so much at the hands of the other. To feed supremacist superiority, to stoke resentment in rural rustbelts, to ply the fatalism of poverty into rage -

This is malicious destruction that mutes curiosity, numbs virtuous instinct, dismisses convicting grace, unleashing the justification of acting from spite, spitefully. It is true when @esaumccaulley & @KyleJamesHoward say - this is exactly who we are; this IS us.

It is true that peace only comes when we stare unflinchingly at the ugliness within. As @wesleyanrudy has said, there is hurt that harms & hurt that heals; a surgeon's scalpel causes hurt in order to heal. We cannot downplay what occurred yesterday out of fatigue, nausea, dread.

The potential grace of civic leaders is that in the public square, civic leaders may foster virtue to grow; the potential danger of civic leaders is that in the public square, they may foment hatred & vice. But as @MittRomney said, it is the burden of leaders to tell the truth.

When he said that, he acted as a leader who fosters virtue (whatever else one agrees/disagrees on). It is true that yesterday displayed who we really are; it's also true that the burden of leadership is very real. Forming leaders not only of outcome but of character is vital.

In America, Protestantism lurched heavily toward outcome for several decades with the church growth movement, justifying a number of things for the sake of results, even smirking at those who weren't "high capacity" leaders.

At this point, we are here: hire for character; fall silent in humility, pass the mic to leaders speaking truth, like @esaumccaulley & @KyleJamesHoward; invest in learning & practicing hard work of intercession which grows discernment of current events; sit w/repentance, remorse.

On one level those who broke into the Capitol are responsible for their actions; on another, some security resisted them while others opened gates for them. Church leaders now have to ask ourselves where we underprepared & dismissed concerns, & where we opened the gates.

Because in church life, there's been blindness to long breach; some saw it & fought, others dismissed or underprepared, some opened the gates. For many, a mix. The civic insurrection yesterday is relevant to church leaders today in part due to the symbols & banners carried.

At home & abroad, Christian symbols were seen striding into a symbolic historic building, terrorizing aides, secretaries, law enforcement, janitors. While officers shot one person, three others died of medical emergencies: heart attack? Stroke? Blood sugar w/out med?

It is highly unlikely three people would've dropped dead at the Capitol yesterday of medical emergencies without the terror of gunfire, tear gas, evacuation. This is cause to mourn; so is the presence of Christian symbols & words in such a scene.

Yesterday, on Epiphany, what had been seen & named for some time by some, came more fully into the light for many others. It was apocalypse: uncovering. Where will we go from here? To Ash Wednesday; to Lent. We're being called to grow beyond pandemic fatigue.

"If you have raced with foot-runners and they have wearied you, how will you compete with horses? And if in a safe land you fall down, how will you fare in the thickets of the Jordan?" Jeremiah's words taunt our 5k exhaustion when some sisters & brothers are mid-marathon.

It's time to get in shape. Learn from the leadership of the marathoners. Get a running buddy. Face the reality of the course. Resist entropy & apathy. So many pastors are so tired. No one is alone. It's not an individual win; a great cloud of witnesses is yelling. Let's go.