

Bread and Circuses

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I've long been aware of this and what it means and how satan uses it to take over a culture. America has been substantially co-opted already by this ancient Roman strategy. In fact, I think it predates Rome since it's a ploy of the enemy and you can see evidence of it being used to destroy cultures and distract people all the way back to the Garden of Eden.

Here are some references so you can look it up on your own.

This phrase originates in Satire X of the Roman poet Juvenal of the late 1st and early 2nd centuries CE. In context, the Latin phrase *panem et circenses* (bread and circuses) is given as the only remaining cares of a Roman populace which has given up its birthright of political freedom:

.. Already long ago, from when we sold our vote to no man, the People have abdicated our duties; for the People who once upon a time handed out military command, high civil office, legions - everything, now restrains itself and anxiously hopes for just two things: **bread and circuses** (Juvenal, Satire 10.77-81)

Juvenal here makes reference to the elite Roman practice of providing free wheat to some poor Romans as well as costly circus games and other forms of entertainment as a means gaining political power through popularity. A reference in the The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy (1993) states that Juvenal displayed his contempt for the declining heroism of his contemporary Romans in this passage. Spanish intellectuals between the 19th and 20th centuries complained about the similar *pan y toros* ("bread and bull[fight]s"). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bread_and_circuses)

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language (Fourth Edition. 2000) defines "bread and circuses" as a plural noun meaning "Offerings, such as benefits or entertainments, intended to placate discontent or distract attention from a policy or situation." <http://www.bartleby.com/61/39/B0463950.html>

There was a day before God scrubbed it all out of me that I was quite the political junkie and conspiracy theory nut. In that age, I watched Bill O'Reilly regularly. I didn't remember it, but when I did a web search on this topic, this article that he wrote for World Net Daily came up. It illustrates the situation in America pretty well. http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=21781

I'm not writing this as a condemnation of America – it is Rome and it does what Rome does, which is dumb down the populace by keeping them entertained, protecting the food supply and making sure they feel safe and patriotic. That way, they won't notice that the whole Empire is crumbling around them and a small number of elite are running the show without oversight or accountability.

Only 50% of America has enough motivation to get up off their sofas once every four years and vote for president! I hope you can understand that by feeding us an endless stream of NFL and NASCAR and WWE Wrestling and thousands of cable stations and porn and video games and concerts and cell phones and the internet and endless diversions and holidays and parades and games, we are left in a state of such continuous motion and overloaded input that we never can focus on the important things. And as long as there is food and drink on the shelves at the grocery store, the TV works and most of the people we know have jobs, why worry? We're the greatest nation on earth. What could happen? We're the only super power left, right?

Was that condemning? I didn't really mean it to be, that's just the "world" being the "world" and doing what it does – which is obey satan.

I've long seen the application of this and the danger of it and the insidious way it which it distracts people and is used as part of the dangerous dialectic drumbeat to get our focus away from the important things. Americans are suckers for "bread and circuses". Can there be any doubt?

Here's the real point of this writing.

One day, I'm just minding my own business, driving in the car and God just plops this phrase into my head.

"Bread and circuses."

"OK, yeah, I know what that is, Lord, what's the point?"

“That's what the church is doing.”

Then it just all hit me like a giant tidal wave and I almost slammed on the brakes. As I recall, I pulled over to the shoulder of the highway in tears.

“OH! GOD!!! They TOTALLY ARE!! They totally are! It's all about the shows and the food!! They're keeping them entertained, engaging them in so many things so fast that they can't slow down. They're keeping them fat and comfy so they won't notice that they are blind and naked and wretched and poor! Oh, God! I'm so sorry! Please forgive us! We're not really addressing their spirit at all, just their brain and their body! They can't slow down long enough to even pray! Please forgive us. Please fix it. Please crush that out of Your true church. Please make them stop! Oh, my God! I'm so sorry!”

And on like that for about a half hour until He told me to stop. Lots of crying when it all crystallized. I have understood for a long time how devastatingly dangerous this strategy is and how it can totally co-opt a nation, but I'd never made the leap and seen how the enemy of our souls had inserted it so thoroughly into the whole of the church of America. Can there be any doubt? Are we not the most overstimulated, overfed, spiritually starving people on the planet? Even getting a church member to slow down long enough to be introspective about the true state of their soul and their salvation is a miracle in itself!

We told them that they were saved and safe – their Roman citizenship is secure – either because they said a little prayer or they prayed the Rosary enough times or because their name is on the roles of our denomination and they're tithing.

“There are no worries now! You're safe! Now come for dinner on Wednesday night and fellowship with us. Bring a pie. And don't miss the Christmas cantata! We have a real, live baby camel! And here's a sign-up sheet for the softball league. And the senior adults are taking a bus trip together to go shopping in Amish country next month. OH! And the youth are going on a mission trip to Cancun during Spring Break. And if you call now you can register for our special “Jesus Cruise” around the Carribean – we're going to have several major Christian celebrities and musicians there that you might get to actually touch! Maybe you could even sit with Michael W. Smith and eat from the 500 item buffet!! We might even have a baby camel on the ship! Oh, you just HAVE to come! God will be so pleased if you can make it.”

It's all bread and circuses. And it's all from the enemy of our souls. How can I tell? Because if God were really in charge, we would be like Jesus and we'd all be on our faces crying until we sweat blood for the horrible state of things and a clear vision of the cup that has been and will be poured out on us before we get through this. We'd be weeping and repenting in sackcloth and ashes for the missed opportunities and millions (or billions) of souls that have been lost while we entertained ourselves and got fatter and fatter. If God was in charge, we would have Fear of the Lord and we would cry until we ran out of tears for the mess we've made of His Body. We'd sincerely apologize to the “world” because we had the Light that they needed, but we blew it out so that we could become just like them. Even while we kept telling them we were “different.”

If God was in charge of the “church,” He'd take a flamethrower to our structures and our systems and our programs and our leaders and our own lives and burn off all the chaff instead of catering to it. He'd turn over the tables and cleanse the temple.

Hmmm. I don't think we can put Him off forever. I wonder when that's gonna start? Now would be nice.

If you have the guts, pray this with me:

Father God, I know we have dishonored You in ways I can't even get my head around. I know that you can't possibly be happy with our fancy shows that just entertain our own brain, but leave people untransformed for the Gospel and dead in their sins. Please make the “bread and circuses” stop by whatever means necessary. I'm sorry for the mess I've made of my life, my home, my city, my nation, the Bride. Please, Lord, please bring a flamethrower to all of it. Please wreck it all. Anything that stands in the way between me and You, please do whatever it takes. Rip it, tear it, shred it, kill it, crush it, burn it – if I can't lay it down then just snatch it out of my grip. For the structures and systems that I've helped build, I repent. Wreck them all. Have Your way. Use what You can and flatten the rest. Please, Father, let NO ONE stand in front of Your sheep anymore and say, “Mine is the kingdom, Mine is the power, Mine is the glory.” If they're not going to repent, then take them home. You know who can be redeemed, but make them sit down and shut up and weep and mourn – or take them home. There is so much blood on their head already, it's just mercy to make it stop. Do whatever You have to do to me so that I'll be a useful vessel for Your kingdom, broken and contrite and circumcised of heart. Teach me humility and give me more Fear of the Lord. Please pour out a gift of repentance on me by Your Holy Spirit so that I can cry rivers of tears in front of anybody until this thing turns around. Please let me see through Your eyes and share in Your suffering. I'm so sorry, Lord. Please do it. I trust You. Make me useful. Turn this around! In the mighty Name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

And don't stop praying until things change.