

Cameron Trimble—Seeing Clearly In Times Of Delusion

John 8:32—“Jesus said, ...and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

Last night, Donald Trump stood before Congress and painted a picture of a nation thriving under his leadership. If you listened only to his narrative - the tale of American Empire - you might actually believe that all is well, that all of our problems have been solved or soon will be, that America has never been stronger or more admired. In one genuinely nice moment of the speech, we meet DJ, a 13-year-old boy surviving pediatric cancer. We all hope that he continues to thrive. He would have a better chance if Trump had not just cancelled funding for pediatric cancer research. Awkward! But step outside of the illusion of that speech, and another reality comes into sharp focus.

For most of us, these are days of deepening crisis. We are watching the systematic dismantling of democracy, the stealing of our data, deregulation that rolls out the red carpet for corruption, the destabilizing of social safety programs such as Medicaid, the unjust (and likely illegal) firing of thousands of government employees and the unraveling of hard-won and sacred global relationships. Just in the past two days, we have seen the stock market drop 1300 points, now lower than when Trump took office, as we watched the President undeniably align himself with a dictator.

What makes this moment especially dangerous is not just the lies (they are endless)—it's the way those lies fuel division and oppression. Trump's rhetoric emboldens the worst impulses in his supporters, giving permission for racism, misogyny, and bigotry to thrive.

Every age has faced leaders who sought to rewrite history, to silence opposition, to demand loyalty to a version of the world that served only them. This age is different. Now, we don't have time to play these absurd games. The planet is warming, clean water is disappearing and hundreds of species of plants and animals are going extinct. Mother Earth is giving us every warning imaginable. “Drill, baby, drill” is the shrill cry of a nativist movement that has no future.

The ancient prophets knew this game well. They watched as leaders told the people what they wanted to hear while justice crumbled beneath them. Jeremiah lamented, *“They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. ‘Peace, peace,’ they say, when there is no peace”* (Jeremiah 6:14). To deny reality—to claim prosperity where there is suffering, to call wisdom foolishness and foolishness wisdom—is not just bad leadership; it is spiritual deception.

History teaches us that even in the darkest of times, there have always been those who refused to be gaslit, who named what was real, who held onto the belief that the people deserved better.

But resistance is more than just opposition. It is also creation. We do not simply fight against the darkness; we build something better. We create spaces of safety, of belonging, of truth-telling and justice-seeking. We become the people who tell the truth in a world of lies, who embody love in a culture of division, who create “[islands of coherence](#) in a sea of chaos.”