

Christ in Prophecy

Social Issues 9: Interview with Al Mohler about America

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: One of the foremost Christian spokesmen in America today is Dr. Albert Mohler, who serves as the President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. And I am pleased to announce that he is our special guest today. Stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. In my book, “God’s Prophetic Voices to America,” which we published in 2017, I identified a total of 13 prophets God has raised up to call this nation to repentance and to warn it of impending destruction if no repentance occurs. Now, four of those were voices in the past, mainly beginning in the 1970’s, and nine of them are current.

One of those voices is Dr. Albert Mohler, the President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. In my book, I called him “God’s Prophetic Voice Confronting Intellectuals.” And I don’t think anyone who knows him, or his writings would dispute that title. Our associate evangelist, and my designated successor, Colonel Tim Moore, recently sat down with Dr. Mohler in his office at the seminary and interviewed him about the culture war that is raging in our nation; a war, which for him, personally, began when he was appointed the seminary’s president in 1993 and was told to clean up the liberal mess that had developed there. Incidentally, throughout the interview there are references to what is called “The Briefing” that is the name of Dr. Mohler’s daily radio broadcast in which he provides a biblical perspective on current events. Here now is Colonel Tim Moore.

Part 2: Interview with Col. Tim Moore and Al Mohler

Tim Moore: Many of you have recognized for sometime that America is hurdling toward a moral precipice; willfully abandoning its Christian heritage, and denying the very biblical worldview of our forebearers. A generation ago Robert Bork wrote a book entitled, “Slouching Toward Gomorrah” highlighting the dangerous trends that were already evident in the 1990’s. Twenty-years later those trends have only accelerated. In 2017 Dr. Reagan published a book recognizing some of the prophetic voices that have been crying in the darkening cultural wilderness that is the United States. In “God’s Prophetic Voices to America” he highlighted 13 individuals who were boldly proclaiming the truth of God’s Word into our national spiritual crisis. Beginning with Peter Marshall in the 1940’s. Today I have the privilege of seeking insights from one of those prophetic voices, Dr. Al Mohler of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here

in Louisville, Kentucky. "Christianity Today" called him the leading intellectual of the evangelical movement in the United States. If I began to recite even a portion of the honors and accolades let alone the books that he's written, Dr. Mohler, I think we'd take up all our time. So, without further ado, let me just thank you for sitting down with us and sharing your insights with our viewers on Christ in Prophecy, thank you very much.

Dr. Mohler: Tim, it is great to be with you, thank you.

Tim Moore: Thank you, sir. Well, thank you for allowing us to come here to the beautiful campus of Southern Theological Seminary. And I want to begin really with asking you about your origins. How you came to be here? Because we have witnessed over and over again that many Christian institutions, whether they are churches, denominations even seminaries have begun to abandon their scriptural foundations, even denying the Christ as He is revealed in the Word of God. And so, what has been your experience as you came to Southern, and some of the challenges that you faced early on even in your tenure as president.

Dr. Mohler: Well, when I came to Southern as a very young man, I was 20 years old, it was a very liberal institution, yes. And I really didn't know that because you wouldn't expect that of a school that was named The Southern Theological Seminary. Southern Baptist, not a liberal people.

Tim Moore: No.

Dr. Mohler: But that just shows us the temptation, and you eluded to this of higher education. The temptation is to move into a critical mode, which means eventually you distance yourself from the founding convictions that brought the school into being. And of course, this is a very old story. You can look to the European universities all established within the Christian worldview, and then growing antagonistic to Christianity. And in the United States you can look at university after university, beginning of course most infamously with Harvard.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: Which was established for the training of Puritan ministers, that was the sole reason for its existence. And then you look at the fact that institution by institution they follow the same trajectory.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: And by the way, this is a modeling process. Higher educational institutions want to look like the prestige institutions. You know, so, if the prestige institutions are the Harvards, and the Yales and the Browns, and the John Hopkins, then other schools want to look like that.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: And pretty soon you hire professors who look like that. And before you know it you end up with a very liberal institutions. And that's what happened to this seminary. Conservatives in the SBC began to wake up to this in the 1960's and 70's but it took them 20 years to gain control. And they gained control in the very early 1990's when a newly conservative board of trustees elected me as the institutions ninth president. And with a mandate to bring this institute back to an unquestioned commitment to the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and to the Bible as the inspired, and inerrant Word of God.

Tim Moore: I love that quote from Jude. You referenced it recently on “The Briefing” as you do often. And what were some of the challenges you faced?

Dr. Mohler: One of the challenges I faced is, look all the accrediting agencies, they are in the control of the academic elites. All the people who control all the big foundations, the prestige foundations, the really wealthy foundations in this country, they are all on one side of the moral divide, the wrong side.

Tim Moore: Right.

Dr. Mohler: And so, an institution is going to stand for the Word of God, and for the full conviction of the Christian faith is going to have to find a way to fund itself, outside those prestige sources. And there’s going to be fighting a battle continuously. And of course, you know here locally the local press declared war on us from the beginning.

Tim Moore: Oh, yes.

Dr. Mohler: At one point, you know, and of course I had sit-in protests, lasting 70 plus days. We had protest helicopters for national news networks over the campus. It was just a huge news story, and they were quite certain they could shut us down. But thanks be to God, they couldn’t.

Tim Moore: Well I was going to say under your leadership, and through the Lord’s blessing Southern as a seminary has grown to be the largest seminary in the United States.

Dr. Mohler: Actually, in the world.

Tim Moore: In the world.

Dr. Mohler: In fact, right now there are more young men training for the ministry here, than have ever been at one place, and one time in the history of Christianity. They said, if you bring this institution back to conservative theology you will scare all the students off. But it is the liberal schools that don’t have any students. All the students you find training for ministry these days are actually in conservative institutions. You think that would be a parable, wouldn’t you?

Tim Moore: I would think so. And I’ve seen many parables like that in Scripture. Dr. Mohler, I think that you would agree that one of the greatest threats to our religious liberty in 2019, and quite frankly our constitutional order as a society, as it stands at least today is the accelerating sexual revolution.

Dr. Mohler: Right.

Tim Moore: So, how did we get where we are today? How did we wake up and find that the pot is boiling, it’s not just starting to increase in heat?

Dr. Mohler: When we ask the question: Where did it come from? I think one of the things we have to recognize you know Will and Ariel Durant the famous historians who wrote, “The Story of Civilization.” They said that the first task of any civilization is to bank the raging river of human sexuality. I think that is absolutely right. You can’t have a civilization without banking that river of human sexuality. So, where you find society you’ve always found marriage. You have found respect for the family. You have found both licit and illicit sexual behaviors. And it has been

important for civilization to exist that those rules be understood. And one of God's gifts to His people, has come to people Israel, was that He gave them the most superior laws.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: You know in the book of Deuteronomy God speaks to Moses to say, "Has any other people received laws like these?" And it didn't mean, boy this works out well. He meant, oh, my goodness, evidentially these are the laws that the Creator would give the creature He loves. This is what life is supposed to be about. The modern age has been an effort to try to undo all of that. To try to unbank that river. To turn to the autonomous individual, by the way that is the big shift. The big shift in the modern age is away from God as the ultimate reality, to the human individual as the ultimate reality. And if the human individual is the ultimate reality, then I can determine whatever sexual morality I want. One historian looking at the modern age said, "That the whole modern age is just one long experiment in rationalized sexual misbehavior." So, it is like we have to understand that human sexual misbehavior is not new. What is new is a society that says we are going to commit suicide. We are going to say, "Okay, do whatever you want." We are going to say, "Everything is normal." We are going to say, "Marriage can be whatever you want it to be." We are going to break the most molecular unit necessary to civilization; the union of a man and a woman. And the household that is created with the children that comes to them through procreation. We are going to break that and act like that's just a lifestyle choice. Now, you mentioned this by introducing the question as religious liberty.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: Well, there we have a huge problem. Because this new sexual set of liberties directly contradicts the teaching of Scripture. And by the way one of the interesting things is that wherever you find any religious system, with a written set of rules, it's amazing that written set of rules is not combatable with the sexual revolution.

Tim Moore: No, it's not.

Dr. Mohler: So, again I would attribute that to God's common grace, just what He has revealed in Creation. The unit of a man and a woman in marriage, and the necessity of legislating sexuality. Well, the problem is what are the laws going to be? And increasingly the laws are going to be that we have to surrender to the moral revolution, or the sexual revolution or we are going to be outlaws. And so that's that collision between the new sexual liberty, and religious liberty. And in the United States this should be particularly troubling to us because religious liberty is guaranteed in the Constitution.

Tim Moore: The very first of the Amendments.

Dr. Mohler: That's right. This one is called an enumerated right. And by the way the Federal Government does not give us religious liberty, it respects and recognizes religious liberty. But, sexual liberty, its not even in the Constitution. It takes a liberal court, you know, to come up with that. So, we have a huge collision and its going to be tough going for Christians. We need to recognize that.

Part 3

Tim Moore: Dr. Mohler, you were one of the original signatories of the Nashville Statement in 2017.

Dr. Mohler: Right.

Tim Moore: Can you tell us a little bit about what that is about, and what it has done in the last couple years?

Dr. Mohler: Yeah, I was involved also in the drafting of that document.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: The need for it is extreme. From time to time Christians have had to release a statement saying this is what the Church believes. And you know in the very earliest years in centuries of the Church it was what the Church has to believe about the person and work of Christ, and the doctrine of the Trinity. But we're now at a point where the intellectual rebellion around us is so widespread we have to define what it means to be male and female. We have to define what it means to be a man or a woman. We have to define sexual morality in an age of such horrifying confusion. And so, the Nashville Statement is intended to just to be that. A statement of a biblical framework for sexuality, and gender. We are in a society, you know, is calling boys girls, and girls boys.

Tim Moore: So much confusion.

Dr. Mohler: There needs to be some document, and that's why that was put together. And by the way they'll be new things we are going to have to address we don't even know of yet.

Tim Moore: I can only imagine, and don't look forward to that day.

Dr. Mohler: No.

Tim Moore: I know that you have great admiration for Sir Winston Churchill who seemed destined to lead his nation, and indeed throughout the world, in World War II. You've also cited modern prophets such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn who lamented, "Men have forgotten God." What advice would those who have come before offer us today, and do you see anyone with the clarity voice to shake the scales from the eyes of our society?

Dr. Mohler: You know I think part of the problem in the last part of the question is that in the age of social media, and the way cultural communication happens now it is hard for there to be a single voice about anything. That is one of the problems. With Churchill, one of the great strengths that Churchill brought was he could control the microphone.

Tim Moore: That's true.

Dr. Mohler: And then he had something that was worthy of saying. Would later be said of him, "He marshalled the English language, and sent it to war. He became the lion of the British people." Or as he said, "The British people were the lion, I just got to give the roar." It's harder these days. I mean I think of the great age of the past when people would debate genuine ideas, these days we are down to 140 characters, so I think that is part of it. But when you think about the Churchill's and the Solzhenitsyn's and the other prophetic voices of the 20th Century I think they would say this is what we told you would happen. You know one of the greatness of

Solzhenitsyn was when he said, “Men have forgotten God.” He said that at a speech given at Harvard University.

Tim Moore: Yes, and they were not very pleased to hear that.

Dr. Mohler: No, and they were also weren’t pleased that he drew the consequences saying, “When you look at the United States and the Soviet Union your cultural relativism falls apart. I was persecuted by one and rescued by the other.” They are morally unequal. Which the liberals at Harvard had been denying for a long time. That kind of moral clarity is what we desperately need today.

Tim Moore: I would agree with you. Absolutely. We lack for those voices, which is why it is so valuable. And as Dr. Reagan has identified, that we do have some prophetic voices. Now much like John they are crying in the wilderness because there is so much other clamor of noise. But I appreciate your voice, and through “The Briefing” and other outreaches that you have a great impact on our society and beyond, really worldwide.

Dr. Mohler: Well, I appreciate that. We have to keep speaking. We have to speak into the wind. When the winds howl at us the fiercest, we just have to talk louder. And Christians need to listen. I don’t mean they have to listen to me, what I mean is they need to listen, they need to listen to discern the truth. And I think that is becoming increasingly difficult.

Tim Moore: And quite frankly I will add to that, they need to listen, and they also need to speak themselves.

Dr. Mohler: Yes.

Tim Moore: Far too often I believe many Christians have been silent. And you wrote a book saying, “We Can Not be Silent.”

Dr. Mohler: That’s right.

Tim Moore: And so, we cannot be silent. In the midst of the noise we have to speak clearly, sometimes boldly.

Dr. Mohler: That’s right.

Tim Moore: Lovingly, but always truthfully, and that is very important.

Dr. Mohler: Paul did not get in trouble for not preaching.

Tim Moore: No. And if you don’t want to get into any trouble, hide in your room and you will not bother anyone, nor will they bother you, until they come.

Dr. Mohler: I know what you mean by that, but you know eventually they are going to find you in your room.

Tim Moore: That’s true.

Dr. Mohler: Because here’s where our society is going. It’s not just demanding that we silence the truth. They are going to demand what we call positive confession. They are going to demand that we say what they command that we say.

Tim Moore: Embracing of the lie.

Dr. Mohler: Right.

Tim Moore: Yes, sir, I have seen that personally. I often ask people if they could have imagined 20 years ago how fast, and how far we would have fallen most folks cannot. What do you see as the cultural atmosphere of our society in 20 years and beyond if the Lord stays His coming?

Dr. Mohler: Twenty-years seems like a very long time, almost eschatological when you think about the--

Tim Moore: But you have been here 26.

Dr. Mohler: I have.

Tim Moore: And it is only a short span.

Dr. Mohler: I have, but you know same-sex marriage as it is called these days, it's been legal by court mandate across this country, only since 2015. You know. So, a child who is 4 was born before the Obergefell Decision, legalizing same-sex marriage. That's how fast this revolution is moving. If you just think about it same-sex marriage is now taken as a great moral fact in this society, so much that you would think it had been in place 50 years ago. So, when you ask me, I'll tell you, yeah the things coming, I don't have to have a lot of insight to see this, polygamy, what is called polyamory. I mean once you begin to redefine marriage, and we are way down that road, then eventually you can't say no to anyone's proposed revision. If consent is the only moral issue a secular society recognizes, then you can get over anything in the name of consent. And that's what we're going to see. And I think what perhaps is going to endanger Christianity in this country more than anything else is the realization, and I'm trying to figure out how to say this in a way that Christian will hear, they have been and are now, and will be coming for our children.

Tim Moore: They already are.

Dr. Mohler: And in the future they are going to be coming with new tools to use against us. They get to our children right now in ways no one had to worry about a generation ago. They get to our kids by smartphone, and by the way we buy them and put them in the hands of our kids. Say, "Here, here, here, use this." Well, we are just inviting that hostile world to come in and take over their minds. And then when we send them into any number of places from schools to other places, we're saying we are just handing them over. And they're coming for our children. They will, I predict they will redefine child abuse, or child neglect in such a way that parents raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord will be considered deficient parents.

Tim Moore: Well, you say they will. Actually that has already been proposed in some circles, even in recent weeks and months by some who would declare that a parent or a couple raising their children in Christian faith is somehow harmful to them, and therefore the state has a right to override even the wishes of the parents.

Dr. Mohler: And you see that right now especially in the transgender situation, where just across our border from Kentucky, to Ohio in Cincinnati, Cincinnati is not Seattle, you know it's not Boston. But in Cincinnati a judge removed the parents from custody and gave the custody of

a child to grandparents because the grandparents would facilitate the transgender transition, the parents would not.

Tim Moore: Well, this leads to my next question quite frankly. As we witness the world growing darker day by day, I'm reminded of what Pastor Adrian Rogers once said, he used to say, "It is growing gloriously dark." And he was referring to the sign of the times pointed to in Titus 2:3 which says, "That we should look for the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus." As you sound an ominous note, and as we recognize the signs of the times pointing to an even darker future within our culture, and society globally. What do you say to people who are looking for hope as Christians regarding the things to come?

Dr. Mohler: Tim, you used exactly the right word for Christians, it's hope. And so, people will often ask me, "Are you optimistic or pessimistic?" And I say, "Neither, a Christian cannot be either." We know too much about the world to be optimistic, too much about sin. And but we know too much about God's purposes to be pessimistic. The Christian mode is not optimism or pessimism, that can wax and wane with our mood, it's hope, and that hope is Christ. Hope has a name.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Dr. Mohler: You know Jesus Christ.

Tim Moore: Our Blessed Hope.

Dr. Mohler: Absolutely. And so, we actually can go to sleep at night with all of these concerns so real, and we're not ignoring them, we're not denying them. We go to sleep at night because Jesus Christ is Lord, and because He is coming. And because the coming thing is His Kingdom, and the going thing is the kingdoms of this world. And so, we just need to remind ourselves of that. And yet, Christ has not yet come to claim His Church and to inaugurate His Kingdom in full. And so, evidentially we are here right now for a purpose. And so, that purpose is to do what Jesus commanded us to do until He comes. And you know the signs of the times are incredibly ominous, if you're just looking at the world. But the signs of the times can never be ominous for someone who reads the Bible and believes in Christ. They can be humbling but not ominous.

Tim Moore: Well, I like what the Lord says over and over again when He encounters people who are called, and who have demonstrated a faith. And He says, "Fear not, there is now no fear for us." Fear of the Lord which means respect, but we should have no fear as believers. I actually like what C.S. Lewis referred to as believers living in enemy territory, of course this was in the era of World War II, but we are finding that the territory in which we reside is becoming more and more hostile.

Dr. Mohler: Absolutely. And we should be embarrassed that previous generations of Christians felt too much at home. You know I think about the end of the 19th Century when certain Christians in both the United States, and in Britain, and in Europe thought that they were watching the kingdom taking shape here on earth. And you now look back with embarrassment and say those very same people went to war, in the most murderous war imaginable in just a matter of years.

Tim Moore: Well, I cite quite frequently a Jewish proverb that says, "If you think the world is going to end tomorrow, plant a tree today." Dr. Mohler I will say this, even as someone who looks forward to the Lord's soon return, you have embodied tree planting. And what do I mean

by that? You're not planting an arbor full of trees, literally, but you are raising up young fruit bearers. And I think that is really what that proverb would have us to do. And so, until the Lord does come, many more will bear much fruit because of their interaction here at Southern because of you pouring into them. And I include myself in that blessed number. But thank you very much for the time of sitting down with us today and reflecting on not just the signs of the times, but as you said the Blessed Hope which is not a concept, it is a person, and that is Jesus Christ.

Dr. Mohler: Well, amen. It has been a privilege to talk with you Tim. And I think we've talked about things that really matter.

Tim Moore: Yes, we have, always. Thank you, sir, very much.

Dr. Mohler: God bless you.

Tim Moore: Godspeed.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: I want to thank my colleague, Colonel Tim Moore, for conducting this insightful interview with Dr. Mohler. Tim has been designated my successor and will be taking over the leadership of this ministry in September of 2021, if the Lord does not return first. And, as you saw, he is very worthy of that call on his life.

I also want to thank Dr. Mohler for granting us this interview in the midst of his very busy schedule, and I want to leave you with his reminder that a Christian should be both pessimistic and optimistic about the future. For, as he put it, "We know too much about human nature and the world to be optimistic, but we know too much about the future to be pessimistic." And how do we know so much about the future? Through God's Prophetic Word. For example, we are told in Romans 8:18 that "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that is yet to be revealed to us." Paul expressed the same statement, and same sentiment in different words in 1 Corinthians 2:9 where he wrote, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has the mind of man conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him."

The bottom line is that we have hope in Jesus, and we should never get comfortable with this sin-sick world. Rather, we should be voices of righteousness, speaking out in behalf of God's Word while simultaneously living with an eternal perspective because it will give us incredible hope.

Well, that's our program for today. I hope it has been a blessing to you, and I hope you will be back with us next week. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program