

End Hate to Make US Great

By Wendy Norman

April 15, 2025

Volume 1, issue 1

A few days ago, I was listening to an audiobook as I tended my greenhouse. The author claimed that people should not vote on principle, but on the best policy choices for the most people. I disagree.

The only way we are going to pull ourselves out of this quagmire in our nation is if we dig deep down into our fundamental beliefs and values. In this community, that should be to love God, and to love our neighbors.

Unfortunately, insidious influences in our nation have crept into our communities and what was once barely noticeable day to day is now driving us towards civil war and, perhaps, the very downfall of our nation. It has already led to bloodshed and enslavement.

Those societal changes, regardless of where they originate, have utilized a strategy that is more effective than the 10 commandments or the 13 Articles of Faith for the majority of humanity.

That strategy? Hatred.

Hatred isn't new in our country. I'm not going to claim it is. But the targeted and generic levels of hatred are increasing and destabilizing our nation and our communities; It is tearing apart friendships and immediate and extended families.

Without listing every possible example of hatred spreading, I do want to point out some specific areas where we have been led towards hating our fellow men.

For the last few decades, media sources have shared every story possible of schools performing badly and bad teachers who harm children. From the time I was a public school student in the 70s and 80s to now, many states are now well on their way to dismantling public education.

I attended education week classes at BYU-I, prior to the pandemic, and the harshness many of the young adults attending expressed towards public schools was disheartening.

I have taught for most of the last 30 years. Nearly all the people I work with are outstanding, hardworking, and principled. They are also almost exclusively conservative.

Our schools in Rigby, Idaho, are not teaching inappropriate sex education in our classrooms. We are not turning children gay. We are not teaching children to hate themselves or others. We are actually working hard to ensure children are learning to read and write and think. We are not the enemy!

Another more recent example is medical providers. Since Covid, some of our neighbors are convinced doctors intentionally misdiagnosed and mistreated patients, or sometimes even intentionally killed patients, for profit.

We are taught to hate public health employees. Masks became political, instead of neighborly. And vaccines? Don't even want to go there! We are also expected to hate Big Pharma, and insurance companies, and scientists of all kinds.

How about police? Should we hate them because they tried to protect our Capitol Building on Jan. 6, 2021, or because they are portrayed as excessively violent and/or racist?

Fundamental to all this hatred, however, is the pervasive view that we should hate our very governments. It has been heartbreaking to see that many Americans now see our own government as the enemy. So much so, that some continue to cheer DOGE as they fire federal employees.

Our neighbors, losing their jobs, and they are the enemies? Which ones? The ones trying to care for poor people? The ones trying to assist taxpayers? The ones who help care for facilities that we use when we visit our federal lands? Or how about the ones who run our museums and libraries? Or those who keep our food safe and our medications safe and effective?

Who made all these people enemies? How does that square with our foundational belief that we should love God and love our neighbors?

A few years ago, I chose to run for Congress. As a Democrat. It was a wonderful experience and I met many dedicated, loving people, who are hoping for a better world.

It wasn't all good, though. I overheard someone ask a friend about my running as a Democrat, as I seemed so nice. I lost friends because of my politics. I have had people questioning my faithfulness in my church. Family members are convinced Democrats are evil, and I am not excluded from that belief.

Democrats are not inherently evil. Republicans aren't either. If we quit the hate, we actually frequently agree on policy.

As I watch innocent men being deported to a brutal prison in another country; As I watch the destruction of the rule of law in our nation, inflamed by hatred; and, as I watch the "United" States appear to disintegrate, I cannot stand by as others fight for what is right. I may only do a small part in trying to change the trajectory of this nation, but the more people who try, the more we can accomplish.

Good people must look beyond indiscriminate or blind hate, to save our nation. No more labels. No more demonizing. Over the coming months, I hope to remind my neighbors that we are neighbors as we all work towards the unity our nations Founders believed in.

Wendy was the 2022 Democratic candidate for Congress in District #2, gathering 36% of the vote. She is the state committeewoman for Jefferson County Idaho Democrats, a professional educator at Harwood Elementary in Rigby, and lives with her family in Jefferson County.