

Live Not By Lies: A Manual for Christian Dissidents

Reviewed by Brian Eschen

In our sin-plagued world, the bent of civil government is to trend towards tyranny. This is especially true of a society that has cast off God's total claim as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords – a society that has become post-Christian. In such a country, the state picks up the claim to total authority seeking to control more and more of its citizen's lives.

Rod Dreher, in his book Live Not by Lies, illustrates this truth by recounting the struggles Christians faced behind the Iron Curtain. He draws parallels from the Soviet era to our modern time comparing the hard totalitarianism that they faced to what he calls the "soft totalitarianism" of our day.

We are living in a society that has made it unpopular, and at times hazardous, to speak the truth. Christians are allowed to believe the teachings of Scripture regarding marriage and sexuality (among other issues), if only they keep those views to themselves and not let it affect their day-to-day living. How can we as Christians fight back against this ungodly trend?

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn gives us the answer in his farewell essay by the same title as this book. We are to live by the truth, not giving in to lies. Dreher recounts the testimony of Christians living under Soviet domination who did just that. Their stories give not only

encouragement, but a strategy for Christians to combat the rising tyranny in our day.

Before He accomplished His mission on earth and returned to Heaven, our Lord and Savior prayed for His people, "Sanctify them in truth. Thy Word is truth." Therein lies the answer. We are to become people of the Book. We are to hide God's Word in our heart and live by that Word refusing to acquiesce to lies.

Our Founding Fathers recognized that conscience is the most sacred of all property. Martin Luther, when confronted with the choice of recanting what he believed to be true or face death, refused to go against that conscience "held captive by the Word of God." Dreher calls us to that same steadfastness – to live not by lies. Against such, no tyrant can long prevail.

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