

Simply One Page- Take It Back

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision motivated by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff 2626

I keep hearing this phrase in Christian circles today: *"We need to take it back."* Take back our country. Take back our heritage. Take back our values. Take back what we've lost. It's familiar language, and I understand the longing behind it, the sense that something precious has slipped away and that faithful people ought to rise up and recover it.

On the surface, it sounds strong, determined, even righteous. But lately I've been wondering where this imagination actually comes from and where it has led people in the past.

When you look back through history, you find that this same backward-facing impulse, the desire to reclaim a former glory, restore what was lost, recover an imagined golden age, has appeared again and again, and never with the results people hoped for.

Leaders have rallied nations with promises to restore honor, retrieve greatness, recover sacred territory, or rebuild what was taken from us. These words always sound noble; they always appeal to courage and identity and belonging.

But every time this imagination has taken hold, it has carried people down a destructive path. A millennia back "Recovering what was ours" turned into crusades dripping with blood. In the twentieth century "Restoring the nation's greatness" fueled movements that left millions dead and entire societies scarred.

In every case, force was justified by what once was. Violence became the language of reclamation. And ordinary people believed they were fighting a righteous fight.

When you turn the card over, the truth becomes clearer: this whole way of thinking, this take-it-back imagination, has never led to life. It has led only to fear, coercion, division, and in the worst expressions, catastrophic loss of human life.

The very power people thought would restore what was good ended up destroying what was good. That should give us pause, especially when similar phrases start showing up inside our communities.

Because here's the striking thing: Jesus never said, "Take it back." He never told His followers to reclaim an era, recover a culture, or restore what once was. He never sent His disciples into the world with a backward-facing mission. Instead, He called them forward: "Follow me."

He invited them into a kingdom that doesn't need force because it is grounded in what is real. A kingdom where truth stands on its own and anything false collapses under its own weight. A kingdom that doesn't rely on nostalgia or dominance, but on presence, compassion, and the steady movement of love into the world as it actually is.

There's a kind of power that inflates itself, fights, demands, and tries to recover what's slipping away. And there's another kind of power, the kind Jesus embodied, that simply stands in truth until everything unreal gives way. That second kind of power doesn't look like taking anything back; it looks like following Him forward.