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Brian McLaren (Hannah Davis/Wild Artistry Photography)



by John Dear

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In a time of rising Christian nationalism, oligarchy and fascism, at home in the United States and around the world, what does it mean to follow the nonviolent Jesus? How do we respond to authoritarianism as faithful followers of Jesus, as people of Gospel nonviolence? Theologian Brian McLaren warns us: "We are going to have to keep our eyes and ears open for the right time to do the right thing."

In this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I sit down with the provocative and brilliant McLaren — a best-selling author, theologian and activist — to explore how Jesus challenged the violent, authoritarian rulers of his day and how we can respond with bold, creative nonviolent action today. "Jesus was an agent of dissent," McLaren said. "He is the absolute inverse of an authoritarian."

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McLaren is dean of core faculty for the Center for Action and Contemplation, founded by Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr, and a podcaster with "[Learning How to See](#)," a leading voice in progressive Christianity. McLaren brings deep wisdom from his many books, which include *Faith After Doubt*, *Do I Stay Christian?* and *Life After Doom*.

If you're questioning what to do, how to resist rising authoritarianism, and/or seeking a faith rooted in justice and peace, this episode will encourage you to go forward as the first Christians did in a spirit of nonviolent resistance and universal love.

[Listen to the episode here.](#)

This story appears in the **The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast** feature series. [View the full series.](#)