

A crowd of people is silhouetted against a dark red, glowing background. Several individuals are holding up red flags and torches, creating a sense of a large gathering or protest. The scene is illuminated by a warm, orange-red light, possibly from a fire or a large light source, which casts a strong glow on the participants and the flags. The overall atmosphere is one of intense energy and collective action.

“Everyone is Out to Get Me!”

Isaiah 8:11-15

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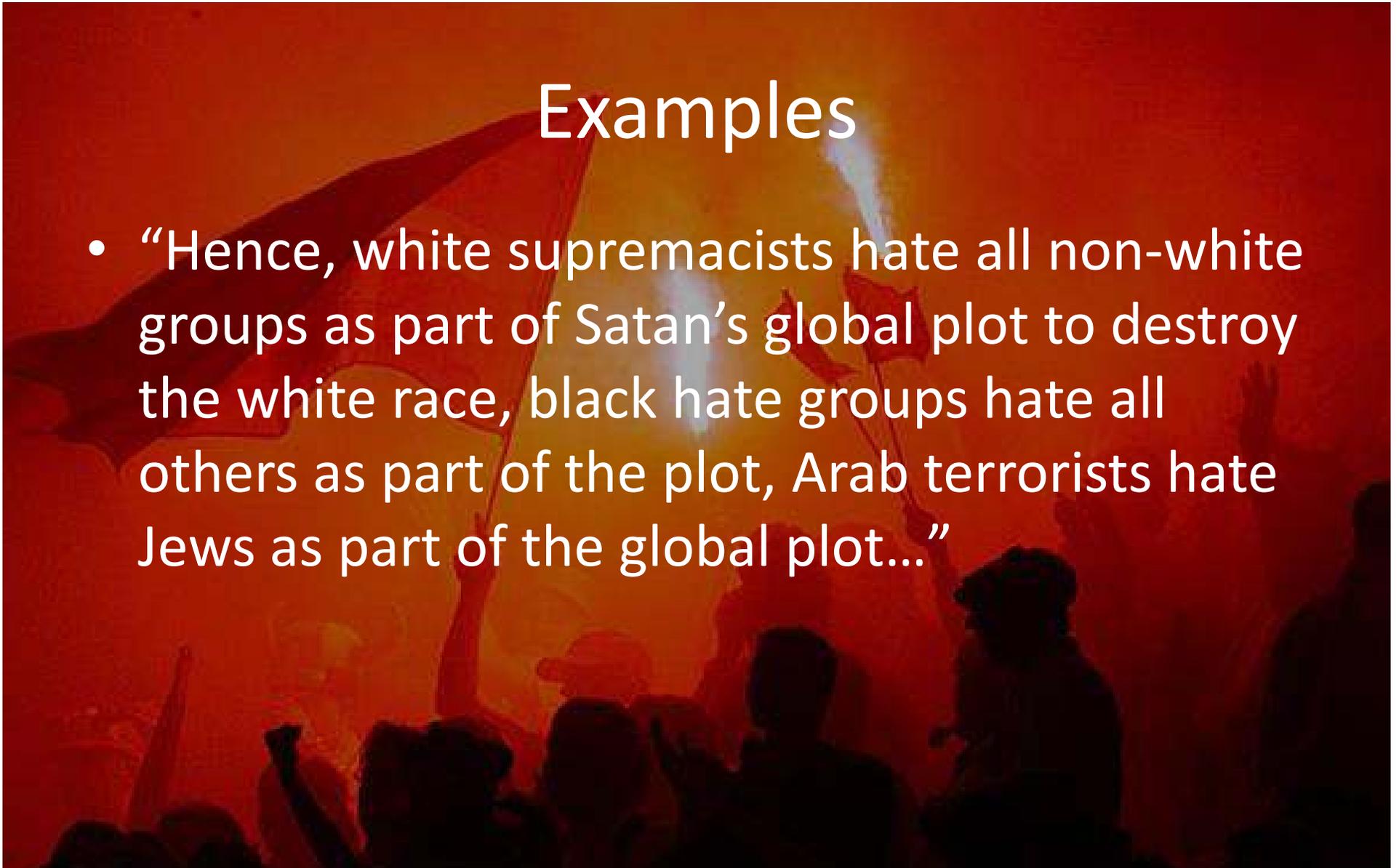
- “For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: 12 Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. 13 The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread. 14 He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many among them shall stumble; They shall fall and be broken, Be snared and taken.”

What Is A Conspiracy Theory?

- “A conspiracy theory is a falsified version of history or current events that redirects an audience’s anger toward another group. The theory seeks to lay blame for a legitimate issue on a perceived common enemy.”
- “There is no intention or plan to resolve the issue; it is merely an ersatz effort to blame someone else for the problem.”

Examples

- “Hence, white supremacists hate all non-white groups as part of Satan’s global plot to destroy the white race, black hate groups hate all others as part of the plot, Arab terrorists hate Jews as part of the global plot...”



Examples

- “The Jews who control international banking have centralized financial institutions into a monolithic conspiracy which is able to direct the affairs of governments by currency manipulations and expanding the national debt. The Internal Revenue Service, Federal Reserve, World Bank and a few other institutions now seek to control every individual by issuing tax-payer identification numbers, credit cards and, in the most recent twist, implanted “microchips” transponders. All of this is related to the scriptural prophecy in Revelation 13:15-18 about the “mark of the beast” [666]. As “money” becomes separated from the real value of gold and silver by the use of paper currency, checks, electronic funds transfers and other forms, the resulting monetary system has become a fraud. This fraud works through all aspects of the system of taxation, licensing, banking and lending with the goal of enslaving the world population to the “international bankers.”

Examples

- There are conspiracy theories advocating that vaccinations are plot by the Vatican, that a small group of Illuminati or the Masons are behind the power of our government, that there is a move to establish a single world government, etc. “The Da Vinci Code” is about a conspiracy to hide the fact that Jesus had children with Mary Magdalene.

Secular Responses To Conspiracy Theories

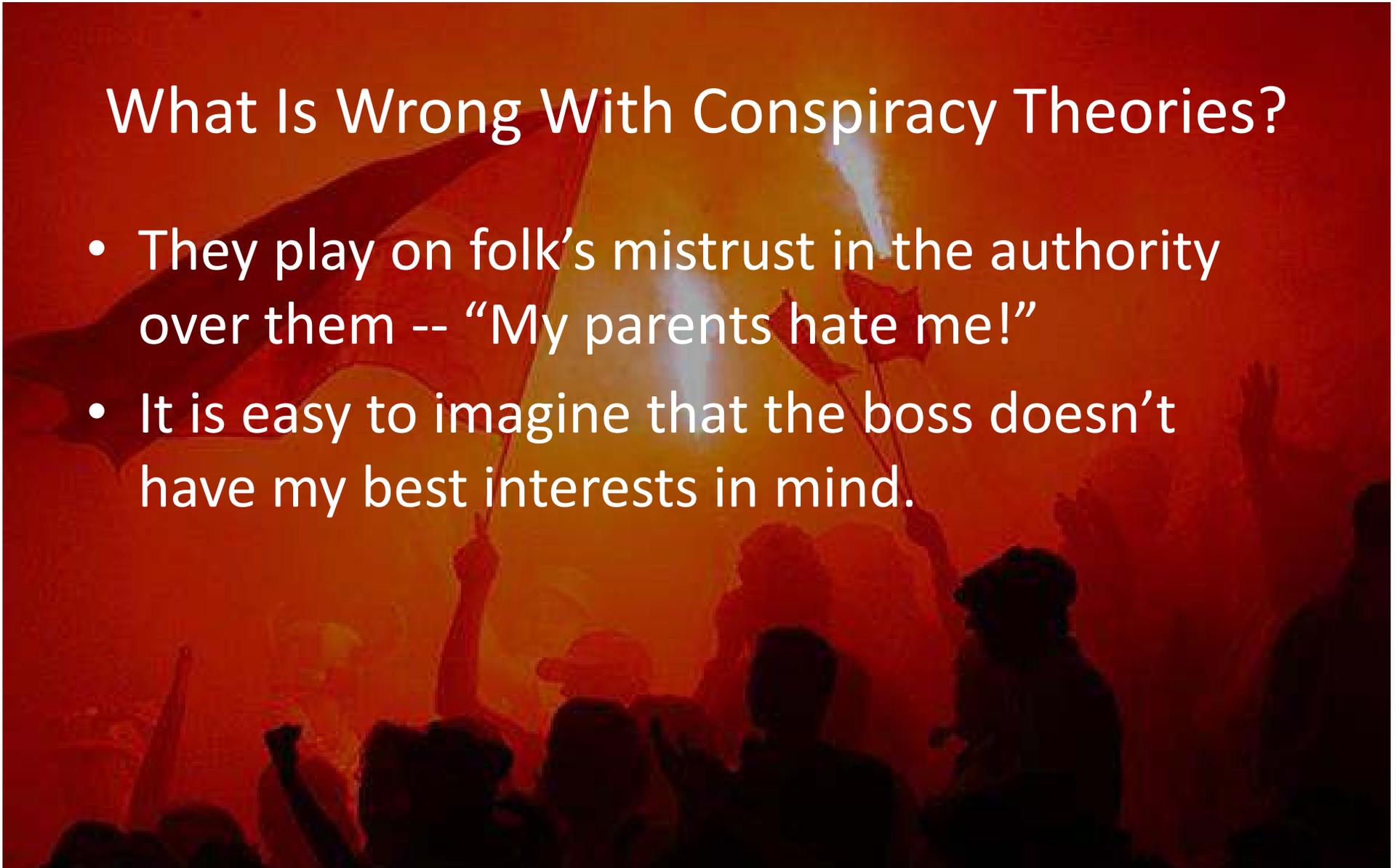
- “Whenever you're faced with an explanation of what's going on in Washington, the choice between incompetence and conspiracy, always choose incompetence.” (Charles Krauthammer)
- “And this, of course, is the central problem with conspiracy theorists — once you inflexibly accept that something is a conspiracy, any contrary evidence has the paradoxical effect of making your case stronger. Every contradiction deepens the conspiracy.” (Chuck Klosterman, *I Wear the Black Hat: Grappling With Villains*)

Secular Responses To Conspiracy Theories

- “Facts count. Conspiracy theories, usually the refuge of the bitter or disempowered, range from factually challenged to wildly hallucinogenic. Conspiracy theories are not harmless entertainment, or a laudable facet of the freedom of speech. Conspiracy theories do both overt and tacit harm. Dangerous when they deal with public health issues, at a minimum, almost all are insults to the integrity of thousands of hard-working and honest people. In the extreme, conspiracy theories slander entire races, nations, or cultures.” (K. Lee Lerner, Social Issues Primary Sources Collection)

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They play on folk's mistrust in the authority over them -- "My parents hate me!"
- It is easy to imagine that the boss doesn't have my best interests in mind.



What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- One of the results of thinking the boss is out to get me is that I cannot be content.
 - 1Tim. 6:1-6 - “Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. 2 And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things. 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself. 6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- Who thinks civil leaders have our best interests in mind?
- God said they are for our good
 - Rom. 13:3-4 - “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God's minister to you for good...”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- 1Peter 2:13-15 - “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God...”
- 1Tim. 2:1-3 - “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They cause folks to think evil of others
 - Titus 3:1-3 - “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men. 3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They cause strife
 - 1Peter 2:1-2, 9, 12 - “Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby... 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light... 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They cause strife
 - Prov. 6:16-19 - “These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They propagate fear
 - Isa. 8:12 - “Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.”
 - Luke 12:4 - “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.”
 - 2Kings 6:16 - “So he answered, Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”
 - Isa. 41:10 - “Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They are not based on truth; at best they are the speculations of uninformed people, and they are designed to play on people's ignorance
- The Oliver Stone/Michael Moore crowd
- Do you know this as fact based on solid evidence; or, is this simply plausible in your view based on what you have guessed?

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They are lies
 - Psalm 50:19-20 - “You give your mouth to evil, And your tongue frames deceit. 20 You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother's son.”
 - 2Peter 2:10-12 - “And especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, 11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They place focus on myths and speculations
 - 1Tim. 1:3-4 - “As I urged you when I went into Macedonia-- remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, 4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.”
 - 1Tim. 4:6-7 - “If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. 7 But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.”

What Is Wrong With Conspiracy Theories?

- They distract from real problems and deny that God is in control
 - Isa. 51:12-13 - “I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid Of a man who will die, And of the son of a man who will be made like grass? 13 And you forget the LORD your Maker, Who stretched out the heavens And laid the foundations of the earth; You have feared continually every day Because of the fury of the oppressor, When he has prepared to destroy. And where is the fury of the oppressor?”
- They artificially fix blame, but offer no solution

Motives Behind Conspiracy Theories

- Hatred
 - Col. 3:8-9 - “But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds”
 - 1Thes. 5:15 - “See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.”

Motives Behind Conspiracy Theories

- Ignorance
 - 1Peter 2:12 - “...like natural brute beasts ... speak evil of the things they do not understand”
- Feeling threatened
 - Prov. 29:9 - “If a wise man contends with a foolish man, Whether the fool rages or laughs, there is no peace.”
 - 1Peter 4:4 - “In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.”

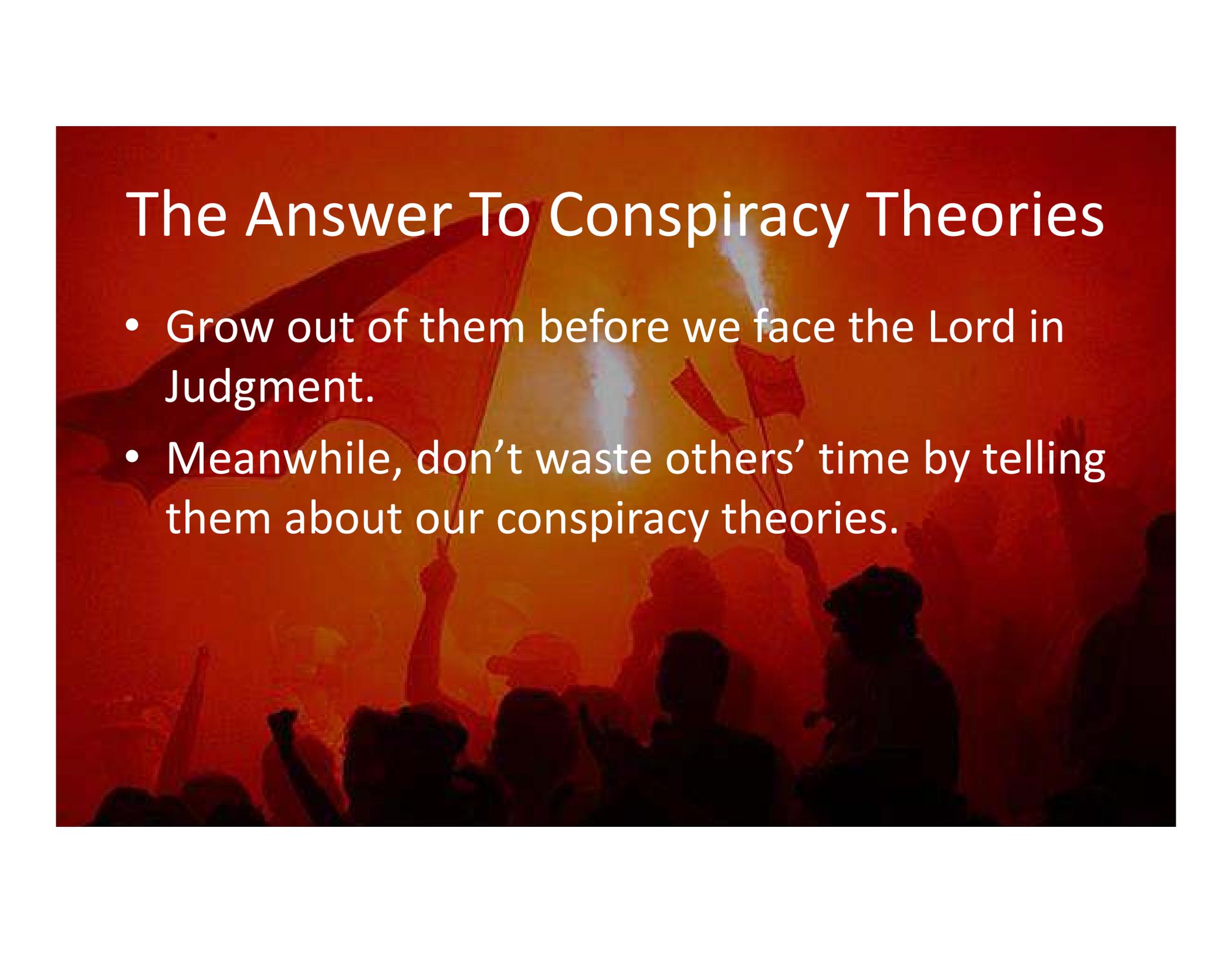
The Answer To Conspiracy Theories

- Don't speak evil of each other
 - James 4:11 - “Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.”
- Put away evil speaking and be kind to each other
 - Eph. 4:31-32 - “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted...”

The Answer To Conspiracy Theories

- Do all things without grumbling or complaining
 - Phil. 2:14
- Trust that God is in control
 - Prov. 19:21 - “There are many plans in a man's heart, Nevertheless the LORD'S counsel--that will stand.”
 - Joshua 1:9 - “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”
 - Matt. 6:34 - “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

The Answer To Conspiracy Theories

The background of the slide is a photograph of a crowd of people at night. They are holding up several red flags, and the scene is illuminated by a bright, glowing light source, possibly a flare or a fire, creating a dramatic, high-contrast atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, oranges, and yellows.

- Grow out of them before we face the Lord in Judgment.
- Meanwhile, don't waste others' time by telling them about our conspiracy theories.