

LIFE NEWS

THE WORLD OR THE WORD?

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by Ron Story, Community Life Pastor

On October 29, I was reading from Proverbs 29 for the 100th time (once every month for the past 8+ years), and I landed on this verse. "Many seek the face of a ruler, but it is from the Lord that a man gets justice."

I thought about how appropriate it would be for this very election season with all the noise, division, confusion, attacks, misrepresentations, and ugliness as people seek a president/political party/ruler who will fix our country.

The mess of this election cycle points to the focus on worldly wisdom that James describes in chapter 3 as "earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be discord and every vile practice." (James 3:15-16) It sounds very much like what I read and hear in the news and from many people daily.

On the other hand, James goes on to share: "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy, and good fruits, impartial, and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." (James 3:17-18) What a contrast between those who are focused on self, this world, and answers from worldly leaders and those whose focus is on Christ, His Kingdom, and the eternal truth of His Word.

That's the battle for us. We live in this world and can be so influenced by all that we hear from this world, which James calls "earthly," unspiritual, and demonic!" In other words, from the devil himself! Our own sinful nature, described as where "jealousy and selfish ambition exist" buys into that worldly wisdom and leads to "disorder and every vile practice."

The antidote for us is to plug into God's wisdom, and to saturate our minds daily with the truth from His Word. Reading a chapter a day from Proverbs as an appetizer, some solid study from the Old and New Testaments for our main course, and a Psalm for dessert.

I'm reminded of the old story of the man who described his life as a battle between two fighting dogs. If the bad dog won, he would make a bad choice. If the good dog won, he would make a good choice. When asked the question, "What determines which dog wins? His answer was: "Whichever one I feed the most!"

Life is about choices and a battle for the mind. Our sinful nature is constantly bombarded by the world's so-called wisdom from Satan himself. If we don't intentionally feed the good dog and seek the truth in God's Word, our thinking and our choices will be earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. As I pen this article on November 4, one day before the election, I recognize that within a few days, half of our country will be upset by the results. For those focused on a person or political party for answers, there will possibly be even more disorder and vile practices.

But for believers focused on Christ, His Kingdom, and His wisdom from above, regardless of the earthly results, there can be peace, gentleness, reason, mercy, good fruits, impartiality, sincerity, and a harvest of righteousness for God's glory! Don't let the selfish and unspiritual influence of the world poison your mind. Fill your mind and heart with the goodness, truth, and hope of God's Word! Feed on the Bread of life!