

Naming the Enemy

Many have lamented the fact that so many of our political leaders in the US, have refused to name an enemy, and consequently, have never able to overcome him/them. Many of us made large of the fact that words like "radical Islam" would never be used. We stood amazed and dumbfounded at those who refused to say "illegal alien", opting instead for "undocumented citizen". When a deranged maniac shot up a military base in the name of Allah, they called it "workplace violence". There is something about not naming the enemy... there is something about allowing him to go incognito, rather than calling him out and exposing him... something insidious.

In reality, not naming the enemy is the denial of reality. That denial has manifest itself gradually in our culture, first being characterized as "Post Christian". This was not as some believed, the assertion that at one point, America was a Christian nation, and now it is not. Rather it was the accurate observation that at one point, the US's underlying ethic, upon which its moral choices were made, was the Judeo-Christian ethic. Without doubt and no mistake, we are "post-" the Judeo-Christian ethic.

As a "new ethic" had now to emerge, whatever that new ethic would be, the culture was "floundering", no longer able to stand on something firm; no longer certain of what was right and wrong; no longer having an ethical standard upon which moral choices would/could be made. Without getting bogged down in where the name came from - though it is significant - we named this Zeit Geist (a German word meaning "spirit of the age"), "Post-modernism". Post-modernism can be defined as "the denial of the "meta-narrative"... the denial of "big story". Individuals were/are no longer required to accept culture's broad, widespread ethic as the foundation for their personal, moral choices. They were/are now free to define their own ethic. Each one may now have his or her own ethical standard, based upon their own location, their own race, their personal circumstance, their educational experiences, their traumas, their family situation, their sexual preferences, etc, etc, etc. Each one's individual "reality" takes precedent over the culture's singular reality. Consequently, without a cohesive ethic upon which choices are being made, the culture is effectively undermined. I have characterized this present cultural phenomenon as "Post-truth".

The Post-truth culture results in individuals who feel no compunction to make moral choices in any way other than that which suits their own, immediate need, based upon their own immediate circumstances, which when changed may likely result in completely different, situationally driven moral choices. This is not the first time a culture has experienced this, for *there is nothing new under the sun (Eccl 1:9)*. Indeed, the Bible records this situation existing in ancient Israel. Although God's chosen people were in their Promised Land, their leader Moses, who united them in an "ethic", God's ethic, was gone. His replacement Joshua, who united them in that same ethic, was gone. Before that Promised Land was unified under a ruler who was *a man after God's own Heart*, the cultural situation was characterized thus, *"In those days, there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes"*. Judges 17:6, 21:25 Sound familiar? This is what results from the lack of a cohesive ethic, grounded in unchanging and unchangeable truth; reality.

The reality that unified those ancient Israelites was the Creator of reality. The reality that unified early "Christian America" was the Creator of reality. Is it any wonder that as any culture moves away from the Creator of reality, it moves away from reality itself?

With that in mind, consider that there are (at least) two facets of this "craziness" that we face in the US; an earthly, political one, and an eternal spiritual one. The way in which these two work together has much to do with whether or not we name our enemy. Those political figures who encourage us to bend, distort and even deny reality, are advocating for a cultural circumstance that they probably do not understand (though I'm certain that there is at least one high-up one who does); a culture in which there is no security, safety, or peace, without a big enough stick to enforce/ensure it. They don't get it, but when followed to its logical conclusion, they are advocating "might makes right". Any wonder that they also advocate that you are personally disarmed?

As those political manifestations unfold before us, consider the spiritual reality that is without question, behind them. The denial of God and His ultimate sovereignty over all of His Creation, is the agenda of the enemy of His Creation. Railing against God's Creation, the living and the non-living, is the enemy of our souls. Using the leadership vehicles of humankind for his own agenda - the denial of God and His authority over His Creation - is the enemy of our souls. I will give the majority of the politicians the benefit of the doubt, that their minds have been blinded by the god of this world (2Cor 4:4), and that they, deceived and blinded, move and decide in the way that they do; ignoring cause-and-effect, and consequence. The blindness is so obvious to those of us whose eyes have been graciously opened by God as to be undeniable and not attributable to anything else, BUT spiritual blindness.

Our enemy is one. He is the enemy of our souls. He uses political leaders, lovers, friends, family members and the like, without discrimination. Be not deceived. While this is a political fight, in which we ought to be active and involved, *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* Eph 6:12 Our enemy is one.

In his pivotal, groundbreaking work 1984, George Orwell spoke of "news speak" and "double think"... methods of controlling language and thought. Both were designed and intended to convince people that the only reality in which they could trust, was NOT one grounded in reality at all, but one given them by the State. This is only possible in a post-truth culture. I frequently have a visceral reaction to this post-truth stuff that goes on in our political realm and in our media, because those operating in those spheres are insulting and even denying the Truth that I love.

And here is reality, loved ones. The Truth is a Person, Jesus, the Christ; the one in whom I personally have staked my earthly life and eternal security. Have you?

Pastor