

Voices: A time to repent from the coarsening of our political witness

September 29, 2020

I am glad there was a gathering of repentance this weekend in Washington, D.C., and around the country, but I hope it wasn't just a time to pray for the speck in the other's eye. I pray it was a time of repentance for the log in our eyes, too.

The coarsening of the political witness of Christians is a serious problem. You can have your political opinion, but don't hold it with cruelty or hate. You don't have to demonize those you disagree with, even if they may demonize you.

Hardening of hearts

I am concerned with the hardening of the heart of the church in our country. I fear partisan politics has become the golden calf taking our hearts and attention away from God. We have traded in God's kingdom for the fickle and finite kingdoms of this world, and the consequences of this trade will be with us for generations.

We seem more concerned with clinging to our own power and rights than with obeying the Great Commandment or the Great Commission.

The call to humility

Paul, in Philippians 2:1-11, shows us how we are to live faithfully in this world. It is a call to humility, to follow the example of Jesus.

We are to bend our knee and confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord, and out of the overflow of that confession, we are meant to “consider others more important than ourselves. Everyone should look out not only for their own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4).

I am afraid we have taken the first part of verse 4 and forgotten the second part. Listen to the way we talk about politics and political issues. Do we talk about our own power, our own interests first and foremost, or the effect the policies will have on our neighbor and their interests?

We should repent. We should come back to God.

Our nation needs revival, but we don't have to lose our souls in the process. We don't have to play by the tactics and schemes of the world.

We must be faithful and generous, loving and compassionate. We must think outside our own groups, our own interests, our own power, our own way and seek the good of all. We should look to how we have fallen short of the faithfulness God has called us to and where we have not been salt and light to this world.

The choice we have

I continually have been warned my whole life about how the media and culture are forming us away from the things of God. That may be true, but it isn't Hollywood flying a flag for President Trump down the street from me that calls for “No More B*****t.” My daughter, who is learning to read, tries to sound out those words on our way to and from errands and church. How do I explain that to her?

What example are we living? That to win is all that matters, or that even more important than winning is living by the fruit of holiness and the truth of the faith we say we are so concerned about protecting?

Fly your flags, post your opinions, and vote your conscience. That's the beauty of our freedom.

And let's all take this time to repent of where we have decided to play by the tactics of this world instead of showing the characteristics of God's eternal kingdom, which matters so much more than the election.

The choice we have—to sell our integrity and holiness for a victory on Nov. 3 or to stand for what we believe with humility, generosity and love—truly is the most important of our lifetime.

Zac Harrel is the network missionary for the Heart of Texas Baptist Network in Early. The views expressed are those solely of the author.