



I share with you today the following from Dr. Kieschnick for your devotional thoughts. . .

Food for Thought

In the midst of the current outbreak of the Delta variant of COVID, the disastrous and deadly earthquake in Haiti, the incredible debacle in Afghanistan, and the ongoing crisis at the Texas border with Mexico, I thought about trying to say something hopefully meaningful about each of those difficult realities in our lives these days.

Knowing that many others much more knowledgeable than I am are weighing in on those topics, I'm choosing instead to encourage each of you to hold in your fervent prayers those with authority and accountability to respond, protect, and preserve human life in all three of those situations.

In addition, I'm choosing to offer some related and some non-related food for thought, statements I've heard and read from various sources about a variety of topics, You may find some a bit controversial:

- *Woe to those who say that evil is good and good is evil, that dark is light and light is dark, that bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter.* Isaiah 5:20.
- *Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine and boast about all the alcohol they can hold. They take bribes to let the guilty go free and punish the innocent.* Isaiah 5:22-23.
- *What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving. The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else.* Dr. Adrian Rogers (1931-2005), Baptist pastor and former president of The Southern Baptist Convention.
- *Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?* Jesus' disciples in Matthew 25:44.
- *I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.* Jesus' answer to his disciples in Matthew 25:45.
- *If you have the same head, you're part of the same body.* Rev. David Drum, pastor and author, on the topic of unity in Christianity according to 1 Cor. 12:12-27.

- Are you THE pastor of A church or A pastor of THE Church? Rev. David Drum on the topic of the Christian Church on earth.
- *We must reject the idea that every time a law is broken, society is guilty rather than the lawbreaker. It is time to restore the American precept that each individual is accountable for his own actions.* Ronald Reagan (1911-2004); United States President (1981-1989).
- *The further a society drifts from truth, the more it will hate those who speak it.* George Orwell (1903-1950), novelist, essayist, journalist.
- *The disaster that unfolded in Afghanistan is illustrative of other major issues at the White House. The people, plans and process the president has put in place to keep America safe are not working.* Brett Bruen, Director of Global Engagement of President Barack Obama's National Security Council.
- *Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.* St. Paul in Romans 13:1-4.
- *What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?* Disciples of Jesus asking him this question in Matthew 24.
- *Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.* Jesus' reply to his disciples in Matthew 24.

Some of these statements are rather discomfoting, to say the least. Others offer hope and assurance.

Here's one of the latter: *I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.* Jesus himself in John 16:33.

My prayer for you and for our world today: *May the peace of God that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord, until he comes again!*

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