

Timeless Voice: Who's the real enemy?

Commentary by Greg Baker

A great, partisan divide is consuming America. As soon as one election gets over, the next has already begun. There is little time for coming together after an election, and with Washington, D.C., in constant campaign mode, very little is actually getting done.

Many Christians have been dragged into this partisan battle as well and have picked their preferred side and drawn their battle lines.

But is it the right battle?

I believe our nation cannot heal and truly move forward until God's people lift their eyes out of the trenches and look at the world instead through an eternal perspective: when the Church calls out the *real* enemy and begins to fight where the *real* battle lines are.

In this world, we do have an enemy, and it is not the person or political party that disagrees with us. Our real enemy is Satan. A liar and thief from the very beginning, Satan has declared war on the saints and on the work of our Father. Against God's work of reconciliation, Satan has fostered division. Against healing, sickness. Against love, hate.

And to combat Satan's work, we must know what his work is. His work begins with lies that result in captivity and end in death and eternal separation from God. In the beginning, Satan used lies to deceive Adam and Eve, which led to rebellion against God, which ushered sin into the world, which took people captive, which led to death.

Yet Jesus came to undo the devil's work: "The Son of God was revealed for this purpose: to destroy the devil's works" (1 John 3:8).

When Jesus came into this world, He attacked the very root of Satan's work, lies, by testifying the Truth. Then he destroyed Satan's second work, sin, by paying its penalty on the Cross. Finally, Jesus conquered Satan's last work, death, by resurrecting from the dead on the third day.

And Jesus summed up his efforts in a sermon at Capernaum, by quoting from Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is on Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives and freedom to the prisoners." – Isaiah 61:1

Christ came and died for sinners like you and me. He exposed that man was not the enemy, but rather the captive – captive to lies, sin, death, and under the dominion of the evil one. Jesus rescued us from the dominion of darkness, and brought us into the dominion of the light.

As believers, if we truly want to change the world, we must engage in our Savior's work, destroying the devil's schemes. This is where the real battle lines are. Not R vs. D, but rather darkness vs. light.

"I now send you to them to open their eyes so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that by faith in Me they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified." – Acts 26:17-18.

We must proclaim the Truth Jesus taught us. We must share the Truth that has the power to set people free. We must proclaim what Jesus did on that Cross, and how He defeated death. We, ourselves, cannot overcome the world, but we don't have to.

Jesus did (John 16:33).

We are told America is divided into two political parties, two ideologies. But the real divide is not Republican vs. Democrat or liberal vs. conservative. It's not even political. The real divide is spiritual. Either we will labor for this world, which is under the dominion of Satan, or we will join our Heavenly Father and labor for the next world, the Kingdom of Light.

God has called us to witness this powerful message to all people, including people on the left and the right. Both sides need salvation, as all people fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Darkness and light have nothing in common. This nation will only find unity when it labors in the light. Christians will only find success when they pull people from the darkness into the light.

Our nation can come together and heal from this partisan divide. We can find answers that can truly help people. We may not always agree, but if we earnestly seek Him, we will find Him and begin to heal. Christ always has been and always will be our answer.

So what are your goals in your ministry in the civic arena? Is it to get people to vote like you to make sure your side wins? Or is it to proclaim liberty to the captives, to heal the brokenhearted, and bring good news to the poor? Stop building an earthly political kingdom, and labor to pull people from darkness into the light. Fight the real enemy. The real battle. And then, and only then, will we begin to see healing and victory.

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