

PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

Col 2:8 | 2 Cor 10:5 | 2 Cor 4:4



SYNOPSIS

P. Peter shared his reflections on the things affecting our cultural moment and his theological and emotional responses to them.



HIGHLIGHTS

1

"WOULD YOU COME TO MY WEDDING?"

The introduction of Prop 8 in 2008 pushed churches/pastors to comment on the sociopolitical issue of same-sex marriage. We can no longer ignore the cultural crises coming at us with blinding speed. Already pushed to wear many different hats, pastors are now called to be social activists, and many are burnt out. While grateful for the support of Kairos, P. Peter wonders if the church has been training us to hit softballs when training for 80 mph pitches is required. We must recognize that we are not dealing with cultural "issues"; we are addressing people. Whatever we think about a pastor who joyfully attends a gay wedding, our real battle is not against flesh and blood. (Eph 6:12)

2

THE REAL BATTLE

Our current cultural moment is affected by 3 things: moral relativism, the "rise & triumph of the modern self" (title of a book by Dr. Carl Trueman), and the erosion of social structures. As a result, our confidence in the Bible and the Church have been shaken. Everyone does what is right in his/her own eyes (Jdg 21:25b). The clash and pluralism of ideologies is what the apostle Paul would call the realm of spiritual conflict. In Col 2:8; 2 Cor 10:5; and 2 Cor 4:4, Paul unveils the unseen enemy, the instigation of rebellion against God through ideas/thoughts. The battle waged by Satan via secular humanism is fought in the mind (1 Pet 5:8). However, Paul also says that the Word of God (a.k.a. sword of the Spirit, Eph 6:17) is what gives us a fighting chance against our true enemy.

3

THE LONG WAY 'ROUND

In Ex 13:17-18, the Lord explains why he turned a weeks-long journey from Egypt to the Promised Land into a 40-year trek. When faced with overwhelming opposition, God knew that people would choose the evil they knew (slavery) rather than fight for the highest good He prepared for them (the Promised Land). The journey to becoming a culturally relevant church that does not compromise on holiness will be a long journey. It will also take a lot for us to give up our inflated view of the righteousness of our own judgments and attitudes. But God plays the long game. We must commit to Listen; Learn; Lament; Love; and Lean into Christ. In John 8, Jesus exhibited a mob-softening compassion and a rebuke toward the self-righteous religious leaders without ever relaxing his standard of holiness. When we battle in the spiritual arena, we must learn to do the same.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What are some cultural/sociopolitical topics that you would like to see the church address?

2

In what ways have you seen cultural topics handled well/poorly? What made the handling good/bad?

3

How would you describe your confidence in the Bible and the Church as a source of authority/truth?

4

What are your thoughts/experiences regarding spiritual battles? Do you agree that the battleground is the mind?

5

How do you feel about obeying God's call to love and holiness?



BIG IDEA

As cultural crises occur with greater frequency, God's people are still called to love others without compromising on holiness. It is not easy to do, but it is what Jesus preached. He has shown us that embracing love and holiness simultaneously is possible. As his disciples, we are called to do what Jesus did.