

# Kingdoms in Conflict

## Part Two

# TALKINGPOINTS

# WALKINGPOINTS

2019.10.27



**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Discussion & Application

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Turn to the color-coded text of 1 Corinthians 1:17—3:20 found on the next page of today's *Talking Points*. As a group, slowly read this passage aloud and discuss your initial, broad impressions of it. What in it makes sense to you? ...confuses you? ...encourages you? ...angers you? ...and **why**?

Now focus on 1:26-31. Notice **who** it is describing: **us believers!** How are we described in...

v. 26 "not many \_\_\_\_\_, not many \_\_\_\_\_, not many \_\_\_\_\_"

v. 27 we are "the \_\_\_\_\_ things of the word, the \_\_\_\_\_ things of the world"

v. 28 we are "the \_\_\_\_\_ things of the word, and the \_\_\_\_\_, and the things that are \_\_\_\_\_"  
(How's your self-esteem now?!) According to v. 29-31, **on whom** is the spotlight to be directed?

But **our** "credentials" only explain part of the reason the world disdains us and scoffs at the gospel. According to v. 27-29 what impact do we "foolish, weak, base, despised, nothings" have on the world?

Verses 29 & 31 are "purpose statements" ("...so that..."). **Why** does God choose "losers" such as us?

But, **are** we losers? According to v. 30, what four things do we **gain**? (How's your self-esteem now?)

**By whose** "doing" are you "in Christ Jesus" (v. 30)? Do you deserve it? Did you earn it?  
(God **called** you and **chose** you—see 1:2, 24, 26, 27 [2x] & 28.)

Remembering that "**Context is King!**", **how** do we "**become foolish, so that we may become wise**" (3:18)?  
What "foolish message" must we affirm, embrace, defend, love, glory in, and proclaim to all?

Finally, as a group, consider how you will create "God Space"...

**Creating "God Space":** "God Space" is where cynics, skeptics, and spiritually curious people can safely raise their questions, reservations, & doubts because we have listened well and demonstrated love in practical, authentic ways.

You have **many** friends and loved-ones who unknowingly are in "Satan's kingdom" (Matthew 7:13-14).

- What questions could you ask them to uncover their beliefs about evil in the world **and** in themselves?
- Read 2 Timothy 2:23-26. From v. 23-25a, list all the things **you** must, and must not, do for them. From v. 25b-26a, what **can only God** do? According to v. 26b, what is true of **all** non-believers? (Of course, they don't know it—read 2 Corinthians 4:3-4.)

## Application-Challenge

Study, understand, and apply 1 Corinthians 1:17—3:20 (see enclosed "**Digging Deeper**" section).

# Sermon Summary      Key Passage: Hebrews 2:1

Last week Pastor Doug began a two-part series called “Kingdoms in Conflict”. Ever since sin entered the world, Satan has been the ruler of the cosmos. There are only two kingdoms, with vastly different values and agendas—and there’s no neutrality. Every person on earth has allegiance to one kingdom or the other—Satan’s kingdom or God’s. Some will say that if we reject their view, that we are rejecting them as a person. But any of you who are parents know that this is false. Our children continually are pleading for views that we outright reject. But our love for them is unquestionable. Some say: “If you reject my view, you’re rejecting me.” We’ve seen that this is not true. But the alternative is not: “If you accept me, you must accept my views.” The connection between loving a person and acceptance of their views is this: “Because I love you, irrespective of cost to myself, I will resist any idea which will harm you; I will promote any idea which would bless you.”

This is the biblical position. We don’t just stay out of things because there may be uncomfortable issues involved. We are our brother’s keeper. We have responsibilities toward our fellow man. We cannot make anyone do the right thing; that’s not our role. But we do have to care; we do have to try to help others who are harming themselves. We do this lovingly, gently, and winsomely, even when the other person pushes back against our involvement. The ethic of “live and let live” turns out to be unloving—keeping our distance and letting others harm themselves. The balance, of course, is that in the final analysis, after trying to sway them away from harmful positions and toward wholesome ones, we respect each person’s right to make choices which will harm themselves.

Here is one of those views that matters enough to fight for, that can determine one’s eternal destiny: “Jesus Christ—and he alone—is God in the flesh.” It’s an objective statement. You may agree with it, or you may disagree. It may be true or it may be false. But one thing that it’s not is flexible; it excludes any middle position; you’re on one side or the other. And the religions and philosophies of the world have taken sides on it. Christianity, of course, affirms it—but no other religion in the world does (and there are 4,200 of them!). The classic “world faiths”, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam don’t. The “novelty faiths”—late-comers and spin-offs—such as Hare Krishna, Mormonism, and New Age don’t. Secular faiths such as Atheism, Materialism, and Scientism, don’t. This is an epic conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Of all the belief systems, only Christianity sends a Savior from heaven—God in the flesh.

The Bible categorically states that all other religions and belief systems are demonic (1 Corinthians 8:4-5; 10:14, 19-20). Diversity of culture is great. Diversity of politics can be fine. Diversity of music enriches us. Diversity in cuisine is exciting. But diversity in religion is demonic. This is not a popular view. But it is the biblical view. The clear teaching of Scripture (1 John 5:19). When somebody we love holds a faulty view, it doesn’t mean that they know that they’re under the control of the devil. They do not. Remember: Satan is a deceiver (2 Corinthians 4:4).

But the Bible also warns believers: We must pay much closer attention to the truth we have heard, or we will drift away from it (Hebrews 2:1). We are at risk. The human heart is not neutral. We will—not “may”—drift away. Our natural drift is away from God’s truth. In order “not to drift away” we must pay “much closer attention” to the truth we have heard. Can you honestly say that you pay “much close attention” to doctrine? How often do you read the Bible, on your own? Do you ever study God’s word, on your own? Many of our friends haven’t—and they’ve already drifted away. You know some of them. They used to be at church. They used to be enthusiastic about God. They used to serve others. But now they’ve just drifted away. Some here today know that they are drifting. You’re not gone—yet—but you’re drifting. I urge all of us: let’s pay much closer attention to biblical truth. Following are five truths found in just the first chapter of Genesis which Satan’s kingdom is attacking today:

[1] “In the beginning God...” The existence of God is denied in our world today. The Kingdom of God resists the atheistic impulses of our day. With which kingdom will you align yourself?

[2] God created everything. The Kingdom of Satan promotes the idea that the universe came into being...from nothing. There is no creator. We’ve got to decide which kingdom we’ll side with on this question. You will be called a yahoo—or worse—if you affirm that you believe that God is Creator.

[3] Every created thing reproduces “after its kind” (this phrase occurs ten times in Genesis Chapter 1). One thing does not evolve from another. The Kingdom of God teaches divine, specific creation and the Kingdom of Satan teaches evolution. We’re free to decide which one of those you believe, but we’re not free to decide which kingdom each view represents.

[4] God’s kingdom teaches that mankind is uniquely created in God’s image. Sub-human creation is not; it is “after its kind”. But Satan’s lie, evolution, is that mankind is just the most advanced animal. According to evolution, humans differ from animals only in degree, not in kind. But God says we differ in kind; we’re his kind. And so we’ll have to decide which kingdom-story we’ll believe.

[5] God created people as either male or female—and we cannot change. More and more people today are confused about their sexuality and their gender. I feel sad for them. Sexuality is a mysterious and powerful aspect of our lives, and so to be confused and conflicted on this issue must be deeply painful. But God’s Word is unambiguous on this issue: human beings come in only two models: male and female. Gender and sex are the same thing, and it is binary. It is unloving to our fellow man to go along with Satan’s war on the image of God. Maleness and femaleness are glorious manifestations which together more fully “image God”. Males and females share equal dignity, but one’s gender is not changeable. Out of love for God and our fellow man, we must choose to hold to the unpopular view that transgenderism is a confused state of mind and soul. This is the view of God’s kingdom, and it is in conflict with Satan’s.

## 1 Corinthians 1:17–3:20

1<sup>17</sup> Christ...sent me to preach the gospel, not in **cleverness** of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. 1<sup>18</sup> For the word of the cross is **foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 1<sup>19</sup> For it is written, "I WILL DESTROY THE **WISDOM** OF THE **WISE**, AND THE **CLEVERNESS** OF THE **CLEVER** I WILL SET ASIDE." 1<sup>20</sup> Where is the **wise** man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this **age**? Has not God made **foolish** the **wisdom** of the **world**? 1<sup>21</sup> For since in the **wisdom** of God the **world** through its **wisdom** did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the **foolishness** of the message preached to save those who believe. 1<sup>22</sup> For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for **wisdom**; 1<sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles **foolishness**, 1<sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom** of God. 1<sup>25</sup> Because the **foolishness** of God is **wiser** than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1<sup>26</sup> For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many **wise** according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 1<sup>27</sup> but God has chosen the **foolish** things of the **world** to shame the **wise**, and God has chosen the weak things of the **world** to shame the things which are strong, 1<sup>28</sup> and the base things of the **world** and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 1<sup>29</sup> so that no man may boast before God. 1<sup>30</sup> But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us **wisdom** from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 1<sup>31</sup> so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." 2<sup>1</sup> And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of **wisdom**, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. 2<sup>2</sup> For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 2<sup>3</sup> I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, 2<sup>4</sup> and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of **wisdom**, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 2<sup>5</sup> so that your faith would not rest on the **wisdom** of men, but on the power of God. 2<sup>6</sup> Yet we do speak **wisdom** among those who are mature; a **wisdom**, however, not of this **age** nor of the rulers of this **age**, who are passing away; 2<sup>7</sup> but we speak God's **wisdom** in a mystery, the hidden **wisdom** which God predestined before the **ages** to our glory; 2<sup>8</sup> the **wisdom** which none of the rulers of this **age** has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 2<sup>9</sup> but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 2<sup>10</sup> For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 2<sup>11</sup> For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 2<sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the **world**, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 2<sup>13</sup> which things we also speak, not in words taught by human **wisdom**, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 2<sup>14</sup> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are **foolishness** to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 2<sup>15</sup> But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 2<sup>16</sup> For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ. 3<sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 3<sup>2</sup> I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3<sup>3</sup> for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?... 3<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a **wise** master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 3<sup>11</sup> For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 3<sup>12</sup> Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 3<sup>13</sup> each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 3<sup>14</sup> If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 3<sup>15</sup> If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire... 3<sup>18</sup> Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is **wise** in this **age**, he must become **foolish**, so that he may become **wise**. 19 For the **wisdom** of this **world** is **foolishness** before God. For it is written, "He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE **WISE** IN THEIR CRAFTINESS", 20 and again, "THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the **wise**, THAT THEY ARE USELESS."

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any topic. Let's use it to 1 Corinthians 1:17—3:20, learning about these "kingdoms in conflict"...

**Monday**— Study 1 Corinthians 1:17-25

**Tuesday**— Study 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

**Wednesday**— Study 1 Corinthians 2:1-13

**Thursday**— Study 1 Corinthians 2:14—3:9

**Friday**— Study 1 Corinthians 3:10-20

**Saturday**— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** read aloud 1 Corinthians 1:17—3:20.

Need blank copies for doing more "Five Question Bible Study"?  
e-mail: [Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com)

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]