

# The Answer is Not Within Us

Anyone beginning to rethink all the talk about “good riddance” to 2020? The first week of 2021 has been challenging to say the least. Once again, we should be seeing politics as the vanity and empty void it is. **Politics is a dry well.** As Christians we all need to be on the same page with rioting ... whether it be from the progressive left ... or the far right... Violence is sinful. See Romans 12.17, 19; 1 Peter 3.9; Hebrews 12.14. So what is going on in our nation? What is causing everything? Where can we go for refuge?

## I. Romans 1.18-32 - Our Nation Has Been Handed Over for Judgment

- A. Four Restraints That Hold Off Self-Destruction:
  - 1. The restraint of conscience; The restraint of family
  - 2. The restraint of government; The restraint of the church
- B. All Four are Under Assault
  - 1. Romans 1.32 - The fight in our heart: Those in the world ...**applaud** others in doing it.
  - 2. The fight in our world: Evil forces in our country are doing everything they can to destroy the family; government; and the church.
- C. It all comes down to a lack of respect. Respect for others needs to come back.
  - 1. Romans 14.1b - don't **argue** about disputed matters.
  - 2. Romans 14.10 - *why do you judge your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.*
  - 3. Romans 14.19 - *pursue what promotes **peace** and what builds up one another.*
  - 4. Hebrews 12.14 - *pursue peace with **everyone**, and holiness - ...*
- D. Judgment is here
  - 1. Romans 1.18, 21-22 - we live in a *godless, unrighteous nation that **suppresses** the truth.* When a nation throws off all the restraints ... God will give it up.
  - 2. Romans 1.24, 26, 28 - God **delivered** them over.

## II. We Must Not Bring the World into the Church

- A. A Serious & Viable Threat...
- B. Worldliness is More Than Behavior: It is also an attitude toward authority.

## III. God Designed the Church to be a Place Where We See Authority Working

- A. In this world, the church is our place of refuge:
  - 1. Psalm 133:1: *How delightfully good when brothers live together in **harmony**!*
  - 2. How will we respond to the authority God has placed in His church?
- B. Transparency & Trust. “**Give recognition**” means to “have regard for them, cherish them, and pay attention to them.”
- C. Love. See 1 Thessalonians 5.13
  - 1. 1 Corinthians 13.4-7 - nothing counts unless it is done in **love**.
- D. Obedience. See Hebrews 13.17.

## IV. As We Close

- A. Place your hopes and aspirations on heaven. See Philippians 3.20-21.
- B. Check your attitudes and perspectives. Romans 12.3 - don't think of yourself more **highly** than you ought to think.
- C. Pursue peace in this place of healing