

“Our Nation”

“Yes,” it’s Election Day in America; “no,” I’m not going to suggest that you vote for any particular individual or party. Instead, I’ll point you to the Scriptures (as always) and hopefully encourage you to consider their potential lessons for us.

In John 11:47-48, the text includes some details that are contemplation worthy, **“Therefore, the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, ‘What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.’”** Let’s take these statements one at a time...

- **“convened a council”**- Group thinking replaced “truth seeking.” As evidenced by what follows, this “council” was not “convened” to seek or find truth, but to decide how to circumvent its implications and what they thought would be its effect(s). They start with **impure motives**.
- **“What are doing?”** This is actually a good question. It recognizes that their actions- both over the last couple years and more recently specifically, have been at least illogical if not down right baffling. Though they readily admit that Jesus was “performing many signs” (or, “attesting miracles”) over the last couple of years, they have done everything they could to thwart, obfuscate, and deny the obvious truth these miracles confirmed, that He was the Messiah, cf. Acts 2:22. Having thus begun with wrong motives, they have proceeded with **wrong actions**.
- **“If we let Him go on like this...”** Over the previous three and half years, had they, despite their best efforts, been able to say or do anything to prevent Jesus from doing exactly what He purposed to do? Absolutely not! So, what makes them think they can *now* do anything to stop Him? Obviously, they are working themselves up to killing Him, but you and I know this only **FULFILLS** His ultimate mission! Impure motives and wrong actions invariably lead to **false/baseless assumptions**, and they did so here.
- **“all men will believe in Him”**- Jesus had said from the beginning of His public ministry that “few” would believe and follow Him while “many” would reject and refuse to do so, cf. Matt.7:13-14. But when one starts with impure motives, proceeds with wrong actions, and makes false/baseless assumptions, **potential negatives are exaggerated**. The “we have to SOMETHING mentality” overrides common sense because of these hyperbolic predictions (aka the “Chicken Little” thinking).
- **“and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation”**- At last the real concern of these officials is manifested! They were more concerned with their “place(s)” than the salvation of their or anyone else’s soul. It is the classic preference of the *earthly/physical* over the *heavenly/spiritual*- they were more concerned with their jobs than their souls; their way of life over the way to heaven; their *place on earth* over their *position in heaven*. Additionally, they were more concerned with the preservation of *their “nation”* than the progression of the *kingdom of God*, cf. Matt.16:23. Impure motives berth wrong actions, which in turn foster false/baseless assumptions and exaggerated negative potentials. All of these

combine to produce what is for the misguided a **perceived untenable result**. Thus, the *unthinkable* is thought; the *unspeakable* is spoken; the *inconceivable* is proposed; and the unjust and unrighteous deed is done... despite clear and contradictory evidence, common sense, and even basic human morality, cf. Acts 2:22-23.

This is how the “leaders” of Jesus’ day were *motivated*, how they *thought*, and how they thus *acted*. Today, in this country, there are plenty of people on the ballot that are similarly *motivated* for place and power over people; that *think* and *reason* from *false assumptions* and *exaggerated claims* just like those leaders did; and that thus have *acted* and will continue to *act* contrary clear contradictory evidence, common sense, and basic human morality. Choose wisely understanding that **“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people,” Prov.14:34.**

(Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Dr. Bossier City, LA, 71111; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)