

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PRAYER ATLANTA
CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS, PT. 1
AUGUST 27, 2017 – BILLY HUMPHREY

I. Increased Knowledge

A. We face many challenges in our day from terrorist attacks to racial injustices to gender confusion. Much of the difficulty is escalated by the information culture that we live in. At the same time there is much confusion regarding truth.

B. The Bible actually describes that at the end of the age there will be a time of great proliferation of information (Dan 12:4) simultaneously with a time of moral decay (Dan 8:23).

Dan 12:4 "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase."

C. The unprecedented increase of knowledge has created an unprecedented context in society:

1. Never before have people had instant access to essentially any information they want.
2. Never before have people had the ability to instantly and openly share their opinion on that information.

D. The end time increase and availability of Information and the instant unfiltered opinions create a greatly heightened intensity and animosity in social conversation.

E. People with the first and loudest opinions on any subject quite regularly set the public perception. With the increase of knowledge, speed of dissemination has become critical. Because speed is critical, truth suffers. Someone can be completely false, yet what he says is broadly accepted as factual because of the speed in which he disseminates an opinion on a topic.

F. At the same time the bible promises that extreme narcissism will possess humanity.

2Ti 3:1-2 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves...

G. At the same time the Bible makes clear that within the church there will simultaneously be a wholesale turning from sound doctrine because of narcissism.

2Ti 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

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II. The Sway of the World System

A. When it comes to social conversations we have to understand that the prevailing tide in the society today is the sway of this world system, which is led by Satan.

1Jn 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

B. The world system stands in direct opposition to the culture of the kingdom of God. The world system influences every person alive on the planet. Each individual experiences the sway of the world system. It is a cultural system that is ultimately antichrist in nature.

C. The comfort for believers is that in the midst of much deception the Holy Spirit teaches us the truth.

1Jn 2:15-16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

1Jn 2:18-19 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

1Jn 2:20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.

D. The question for believers in this hour is whether they will allow the world system to influence them or whether they will submit to God's truth and the ways of His kingdom.

E. The enemy doesn't introduce the world system with explicitly antichristic thought; he leads with lusts that focus on self-preservation and self-preference. By appealing to human desires for pleasure, beauty, and privilege he deceives people into living according to his values instead of the values of the kingdom of God.

III. Who Forms Our Paradigm?

A. Jesus has thoughts and opinions on everything that happens under the sun. He is intimately acquainted with the cries of injustice throughout the earth. And He has an opinion about it all.

B. The question we must ask ourselves is, "Do we share His opinion or do we have an alternate opinion that His?"

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C. Ultimately if my opinion isn't according to Jesus ways, i.e. the culture of the kingdom of God, it is according to the opposing kingdom. My thoughts and opinions must be aligned with the thoughts and opinions of the king of the kingdom or else I will find myself in opposition to Him.

D. I'm concerned about the propensity of believers to boldly share opinions that are clearly not filtered by the culture of the kingdom. What if in the course of public debate and sharing your opinion, you find that your opinion is in opposition to the king of the kingdom?

Mat 6:23 "... If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

E. Even the disciples at times didn't understand the ways of the Kingdom. If this was their state, how much more are we potentially susceptible to being in opposition to Jesus?

Luk 9:51-55 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" 55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

F. I want to call us out of living out by worldly opinions and feelings that we may have received from social rhetoric, political parties, our natural culture, our personal experience, or our family. And I want to call us into firstly living by the culture of the Kingdom of God - that the truth of God's kingdom would inform our lens and opinion on every matter of this life.