

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#04-1026

They Speak Falsehood

March 10, 2010

If you have not done so, please read the last two issues #04-1024, and #04-1025.

It does not take very long for anyone regularly listening to the daily news spewed out of the multi-media of our day to realize that we are living in a **politico-centric era** in the US. One cannot listen to the news each day without some political analysis, some speech given by a politician, especially our president, or some political controversy being reported.

The term *politico-centric* refers to a near-national obsession with politics that has become the heart of the national life and the preoccupation of the multi-faceted media of our day. Further, politics has aroused the people into looking to the government to solve their problems, as if it were their savior. Unfortunately, it is doing just the opposite as it continually erodes away our **unalienable rights endowed by the Creator, to include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.**

In its purest sense, **politics** is simply “the science and art of political government.” The words *political* (adjective) and *politics* (noun) refer to the methods, tactics, schemes, and strategies employed to achieve some objective, whether for the good of the people or not. One of the definitions of the word *politics* is “**a factional scheming within a group.**” **Scheming** is defined as “crafty; tricky; given to forming crafty schemes or plots.”

We could say that various groups scheme to bring about an end, often justifying the means to get there, even if the means are unrighteous. The group could include not only political parties but lobbyists from corporations, unions, trade groups, and a host of other self-interest groups that push certain agendas in order to achieve a goal to benefit the constituents of the group, perhaps to the detriment of others outside the group.

David’s psalm speaks to the heart of the matter of politics and governance in our day.

A Psalm of David. (1) Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases to be, for the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. (2) They speak falsehood to one another; with flattering lips and with a double heart they speak. (3) May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that speaks great things; (4) who have said, “With our tongue we will prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us?” (5) “Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, now I will arise,” says the LORD; “I will set him in the safety for which he longs.” (6) The words of the LORD are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times. (7) You, O LORD, will keep them; You will preserve him from this generation forever. (8) The wicked strut about on every side when vileness is exalted among the sons of men. (Psalm 12:1-8 NASB)

Where is the godly man? Please keep in mind that this is a rhetorical question. Surely, God has His godly men and women in leadership positions, so this is not an indictment of all leaders. However, it does seem that the heart of politics and governance in our day is expressed through this psalm. Ones who are faithful to the Lord have given way to ones who are faithful to self, to party, to special interests, and to money, to name a few. They speak falsehood to one another and, in so doing, speak falsehood to their fellow countrymen whom they represent. They are double-hearted in their speech.

Falsehood is defined as “lack of accuracy or truth, falsity; deception,” and “the telling of lies; lying.”

Double-hearted could be likened to doublespeak, which refers to speaking so as to deliberately disguise, distort, or reverse the meaning of words. For example, a politician might call a terrorist act, a man-made disaster, or a job that was not lost, a saved job, or one Republican vote for a Democrat-sponsored bill, bipartisanship. A double-heart is also likened to holding a double standard, which refers

to demanding a certain standard of conduct or behavior from others but not demanding the same standard from oneself. For example, when one political party uses reconciliation, it is acceptable, but when the other uses it, it is not. A double standard also refers to changing one's standard based on the desired end. Double-hearted politicians are like trees blowing in the wind; one moment they are bending to the east, the next moment they are bending to the west. They are like chameleons that conveniently change color to disguise themselves from their predators. One moment they are holding one position, and the next moment they are holding just the opposite. This is double-hearted.

The game of politics seems to require that they lie to one another, which in turn means they lie to us. They flatter one another through civility (politeness) as they go about speaking falsehood. Some even boldly and audaciously announce that they will prevail. "We will not stop until we win. We will prevail. We will pass healthcare. We will fundamentally transform America." Who is lord over ones who speak in such a fashion? Their strength is in the words that come forth through their lips.

Recently, I heard the word *gamesmanship* used in reference to the political theater we see being played out daily among those who run our government in both the executive and legislative branches.

Gamesmanship is defined as "the art or practice of ethically dubious methods to gain an objective without actually violating the rules" and "the use of ethically dubious methods to gain an objective."

Has governance of the mighty US become a game in which the players (i.e., leaders) compete against one another to see who wins and who loses? Has it become like a sport? Has the standard of ethics been brought so low that a Congressman's unethical behavior is explained away as irrelevant because it has no bearing on national interests, as if character never enters into decisions made by such a one? Has politics stooped so low as to be a theater of falsehood, of lies, and of corruption?

Another word frequently used as if it were the solution to the country's problems is the word ***bipartisan***, which is defined as "of, having members from, or representing two parties." The noun ***partisan*** is defined as "a person who takes the part of or strongly supports a side, a party, or another person: often said of an unreasoning, emotional adherent." The adjective *partisan* speaks of one who is "blindly or unreasonably devoted." So, as the "political think" goes, one who is bipartisan is open to other ideas and reasonable; one who is partisan is not.

These words are used often by the politicians as they argue and debate over new legislation. The cry goes out: "We need bipartisanship. The American people want us to govern in a bipartisan way." It is particularly disdainful that this cry often goes out when one political party is not getting its way and the other is. Frankly, **we don't need bipartisanship; we need righteousness.**

Bipartisanship is often touted as if it were a good thing. After all, as the thinking goes, if two political parties come together and compromise their ideas, even their ideologies and principles, to come up with an agreement, then the final product, although perhaps not the best, is better than nothing. But, is it? Is it better if its foundation is unrighteous? The problem is that the compromise, in fact, may be worse than if nothing at all were accomplished.

Who or what is to say that a compromise is a good thing? Is a **lukewarm drink** better than a cold drink on a sweltering hot day or a hot drink on a frigidly cold day? We should be reminded of the Lord's warning to the Laodicean ecclesia that He would have preferred them either to be cold or hot rather than lukewarm (Revelation 3:15-16).

Bipartisanship in the current political climate is like a lukewarm drink that must be spewed or vomited out of the mouth.

Nations do not need bipartisanship; they need righteousness from righteous leaders who know the will and law of God and have wisdom from above to govern righteously and justly. I feel like David as he cried out: "**Help, Lord! They speak falsehood!**"

Praise God; the kingdom of our Lord is coming soon and **righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne** (Psalm 97:2). "**Because of the devastation of the afflicted, because of the groaning of the needy, now I will arise,**" says the LORD; "**I will set him in the safety for which he longs.**" The words of the Lord are pure words; He will not fail!