# ***Daily Devotional:*** *For Election Week*

### ***Day 1- The Shape of Wisdom***

> *Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.*
>
> *Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!*
>
> *Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies.*
>
> ***-****Psalm 25:4-10*

Above all else, seek his wisdom. But how do we do that? First, a clarification on what seeking his wisdom *isn't*.

God gave us minds, and the ability to think critically. He entrusts us with life and the decisions we make and he acts us to work to the best of our ability to make the most of what he has given us. Wisdom is not simply asking God to give the names we should pick at the polls. That's not wisdom, that's just an answer.

Instead, he calls us to learn who he is and make decisions that reflect and honor him. What are his priorities? What are the things he values above all else? In nearly every decision in life, we must weigh pros and cons-consider trade offs and the negative effects of both sides of a decision. Politics is no different. Seeking wisdom is searching scripture to develop an understanding of what things are most important to God, and making them most important to us.

As you prepare to enter this week, spend time in prayer asking God to reveal what his priorities are. Read scripture on your own and see if anything stands out to you. Ask him to reveal any priorities you have that are not of him and move them down your list (if not remove them altogether).

### ***Day 2- Set Your Eyes***

Unless you've barricaded yourself underground, you've been inundated with messages these last few weeks. Commercials, signs, text messages… So today, I'm going to add as little as possible to the list of messages from other people. Today, our prayer is to have our eyes opened to the goodness of God, to be reminded of his greatness, and to keep an eternal perspective in the midst of earthly turmoil.

Turn off the TV, silence your phone (and consider hurling it across the room for good measure), and silence any other distractions.

Read the following passages, reflecting and meditating on each. Maybe this means reading them multiple times, either aloud or in your head. If you're feeling artistic, maybe sketching out the images

you see, or if drawing isn't your thing, just writing individual words or phrases that stand out to you in on a sheet of paper. You can close your eyes and try to imagine the scenes in your head, if that works for you.

The point is-spend some time resetting your perspectives and priorities after being inundated with negative messages for weeks.

*Passage 1: Isaiah 40:12-26*
*Passage 2: Psalm 93*
*Passage 3: Psalm 145: 1-13*

***Day 3- Give to Caesar***

> *Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away.*
>
> *-Matthew 22:15-22*

Depending on your schedule, you may already be hearing of the results of the election. Take this passage, as well as the message from Sunday, to prayer today. When confronted with one of the great political discussions of his day, Jesus replied meekly, simply, and brilliantly. "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's". Ultimately, earthly thrones, positions, seats, and powers are just that-the earth's. They have absolutely no eternal significance. In heaven, we won't be looking back at who had the most authority while they were on earth. If anything, we'll be looking back at who did the most good that no one ever saw, with gentleness and a quiet spirit.

*Prayer time: The election is Caesar's-give it to him. Then, give God your heart.*

***Day 4- Where's it coming from?***

> *Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*
>
> *James 3:13-18*

James here gives us a test to use when we are identifying wisdom. True wisdom that comes from God presents itself in meekness. Those who boast and deceive do so out of jealousy and selfish ambition. James is clear-any apparent wisdom that is presented with bragging and lying is not of God, but rather is "earthly, unspiritual, and demonic". *Yikes*. We may find it difficult to discover a candidate who fits James' model of Godly Wisdom.

Let me pause here to reiterate something-I'm not here (and this devotional isn't here) to tell you who to vote for. I do, however, believe that this passage should shape the *way in which we vote*. What do I mean by that? Vote in honesty and truth. Don't romanticize a candidate in your mind and convince yourself that they are a voice for truth and godly wisdom if they are constantly speaking in boasting and deceit. *Don't ascribe to God what is not from him.*

Most importantly-how do you handle yourself when you are talking with others? Does the wisdom that is operating in you produce meekness and gentleness? How much do you enjoy winning arguments with others? Does it bring you joy when those who oppose you are humiliated? If so, it's time for some serious prayer-ask God to confirm if you've been listening to the wrong voice of wisdom. If you have, repent, turn back to God, and ask him to renew your mind with his voice, teaching, and wisdom.

***Day 5- A Look In the Mirror***

> *There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?*
>
> *-Luke 13:1-4*

Again, Jesus is confronted with a political trap. Pilate has committed the atrocious act of executing Jewish people and mixing their blood with animals to sacrifice to a pagan God.

Let's pause for a second. Think of the politician you dislike and disagree with the most. Have they murdered people and then publicly mixed their blood with animals as a sacrifice to a false pagan God? Unless I missed a huge news story, the answer is no. Now I'm not saying this passage excuses any evil things politicians today have done. But look at what Jesus says after his.

"No, I tell you; but unless you repent." *You. YOU! …me?* Hold on a second Jesus. You're presented with an absolutely horrific act committed by Pilate, and instead of condemning him, you tell me that *I* need to repent?

*Seriously?*

**Yes.**

*Why?*

**Because you're here.** Pilate wasn't standing before Jesus-you are. Pilate never acknowledged Jesus as his savior-you have. Even when Jesus *was* standing before Pilate he didn't condemn him.

*Here's our prayer today-* When we stand before Jesus and point out the window at those we see as our opponents, saying "look at all the evil this person or that has done" do you know what his response is?

"Go look in a mirror."

***Day 6- Peace***

*Phew.* We made it. Take this day to rest in him. Here's a few keywords from these passages to focus on. Add any that stand out to you after you've read them. If you don't see them in your life, spend some time seeking God, and seeking these things he has promised.

Rejoice Gentleness Peace Noble Content

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

*Philippians 4:4-9*

*My heart is not proud, LORD, my eyes are not haughty;I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content. Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.*

*Psalm 131*