

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Give me understanding

- Pastor Hank French

*Let my cry come before you, O LORD;
give me understanding according to your word....
My lips will pour forth praise,
because you teach me your statutes.
My tongue will sing of your promise,
for all your commandments are right.
(Psalms 119:169, 171-172).*

In times of chaos and confusion—and if there ever was such a time in this country, it is now—it is common for people to want clarity, to want insight into how to think about and respond to the chaos and confusion. For people of Christian faith, there is a source for such clarity and insight, namely, the word of God.

On the ELCA website, under the Faith tab on the home page, you will find an “ELCA Teaching” tab which will lead to a “Scripture, Creeds, Confessions” page. On that page you will find this statement: “Lutheran Christians say that the Scriptures are the “source and norm” of their teaching and practice.” When I was in the seminary, it was stated this way: “The Scriptures are the source and norm for Christian faith and life.”

The Psalmist writes, *“Let my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to your word.... you teach me your statutes.”* Which is to say, that we should read the scriptures with the confidence that God will give us understanding and will teach us what he wants us to know.

The writer of the book of James assures us that, “If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you” (1:5).

In this time of chaos and confusion, a serious study of the Scriptures makes eminent sense for clarity and insight into what is going on and if you are wondering how Christians should respond to what is going on. The place to start is with the four Gospels. Jesus life and teaching are the lens through which we should read the Old Testament and the letters in the New Testament. If anything you find in the Bible contradicts the teachings of Jesus, stay with the teachings of Jesus and you won’t go wrong.

As I write these devotions each week, I discover again and again that the teachings of Jesus have much to tell us about how we should be, think, and do during this time of chaos and crisis.

Prayer: "Let my cry come before you, O LORD; give me understanding according to your word." Amen.