

## Thoughtful & Prayerful Action Needed

This is a season for decision making and the choices to be made will be far reaching and significant. Generally, when decisions are made, the pros and cons are considered and a choice is made with the greater good in mind. In this time however, for many, choices are being made out of anger, or frustration, or as a protest by people who feel unheard or under appreciated. Some are also exploiting the situation for personal gain. Fear and mistrust dominate and are being cultivated by some to bring about results far different than most of those called to choose have considered, can fathom, or would support if they did. Potentially more destructive is the fact that many Christians are willing to overlook a myriad of leadership faults and flaws, and even violate their own Christian principles as long as one or two treasured issues are 'correctly' addressed. The harm this will do to those who chose this, to their witness as Christians, and to everyone else in the long run is incalculable. Damage already being done is that our sense of common ground and community has become a casualty of poisonous rhetoric and the intentional distortion of facts.

Those who follow Jesus are called to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves", especially in such times. This means we must have an active faith which requires us to keep our eyes open to the needs of others, and our minds engaged so we are able to use our gifts "for the glory of God *and* our neighbor's good." **A key part of this active faith is the constant prayer** to which we are called to seek God's will, as well as the wisdom and strength to be faithful servants. Such prayer and faithfulness require constant vigilance as we seek to care for those who are hurt, weak, lost, suffering, homeless, or in need; serving as followers of Jesus and his faithful witnesses in this world.

### This week, pray for:

- those **who are making choices** about who will provide future leadership in this country, and those who will be called to lead.
- the continuing **COVID-19 pandemic** which continues to grow worse.
- **Nigeria** where peaceful protests persuaded the government to disband a notorious police unit, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) charged with beatings, hangings, mock executions, sexual assault, & waterboarding. Some people have used the protests as an excuse for luting & violence, especially stealing food & other vital supplies. This has led to curfews & police crackdowns with more police abuses including excessive, even deadly force. Boko Haram attacks also continue leaving many people afraid to sleep in their own homes at night. A Bethany student, EYN headquarters, & other Brethren are in harm's way.
- **those dealing with storms, fires, flooding, earthquakes, & other disasters**
- **all people living with violence**
- **all who suffer**; from the ugliness of racism & brutality; from the dehumanizing nature of fear; or from the consuming & destructive power of hate.
- **everyone** caught up in the fear, frustration, anger, sense of helplessness, or destructive allure of the powers that are working to divide us into warring camps instead of seeking to bring us together so we can all use our varied gifts & ideas to address the issues that confront us all for the good of everyone.



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