

## Divine Words for a Noisy World

A recent Classic Peanuts comic strip featured Charlie Brown telling Linus, “You think my dad doesn’t know anything about cars? Yesterday he heard a strange grinding noise coming from the engine.” Linus replied, “Don’t tell me he stopped the car and fixed it...” Charlie responded, “No, he just turned the radio up louder so he couldn’t hear it.”

Charlie Brown’s dad was in denial, wasn’t he? He simply turned up the radio in hopes of concealing the real problem, hoping the problem would just go away.

There are some very noisy problems in the world today, aren’t there? These are “grinding” moral, political, and spiritual noises that persist. Things are broken, but rather than truthfully acknowledge those real problems or the source of those problems, it’s only natural to turn up the volume on our proverbial TVs or radios to deny the real problems and our inability to fix what is truly broken.

This same instinctive human response to major “engine” problems was also evident in Biblical days. Rather than acknowledge and address the deep spiritual problems in their lives, people preferred the superficial response. In doing so, they, too, essentially “turned up their radios” and hoped the real problems would simply go away.

We, too, are prone to do so, aren’t we? Rather than deal directly with our core problems we, too, may be tempted to focus on the superficial. Sadly so, we may find ourselves turning up the volume by raising our voices, pointing the accusing finger at others, or making excuses for ourselves.

As Charlie Brown’s father realized, denying the deep and real problem by simply turning up the radio did not rectify the problem; the grinding noise only continued. The Bible identifies our deep problem as the sinful heart, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts and actions...” (Matthew 15)

The Bible also speaks of Jesus’ heart. It is pure and holy. Out of His heart flows love, mercy, and compassion. His heart is perfectly aligned with God’s Holy Word and Will. However, Jesus didn’t do so as a “holier than thou” show off; Jesus did so as Savior. His perfect alignment with God’s will to bring salvation to mankind was evident each day, even on that very day He submitted Himself to Calvary’s cross in our place. And yes, even then He would declare in His dying words, “Father, forgive them.”

Jesus’ fervent prayer was answered by His Father with “Amen!” In doing so, our gracious God dealt with the true problem - our hearts - and through His love created in us new hearts. (Psalm 51) Flowing from our new hearts come forth fresh words - of praise and thanksgiving; flowing from our new hearts flows compassion toward others.

God does not deny our true problems or conveniently sidestep our needs. Nor does He arrogantly turn up the volume of His admonitions to merely avoid our deepest needs. In mercy He gives us

new hearts, and He opens our hearts to receive more and more of His mercy each day. With new hearts He sends us forth into the noisy broken world with His truth and His compassion for each precious life. Refreshingly, He assures us that His wondrous work through us is never in vain.

Pastor Case