

Dear Seattle: Jesus Loves You

How to Respond to Other Voices of Opinion

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SERIES TEXT: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." - Jesus, John 3:16 NIV

SERIES BIG IDEA: Jesus lovingly came, died and rose again to save you.

John 3:22-30 NIV:

22) **After this, Jesus** and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where **he spent some time with them**, and **baptized**. 23) Now John also was **baptizing** at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be **baptized**. 24) (This was before John was put into prison.) 25) **An argument developed** between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. 26) They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you **on the other side** of the Jordan – the one you testified about – well, he is **baptizing**, and **everyone is going to him**." 27) **To this John replied**, "A man can receive only what is given him from **heaven**. 28) You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' 29) The **bride** belongs to the **bridegroom**. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and **listens** for him, and is **full of joy** when he hears the **bridegroom's voice**. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. 30) He must become greater; I must become less.

HOW TO RESPOND TO OTHER VOICES OF OPINION

I. LISTEN TO THE LORD'S VOICE IN THE FACE OF ARGUMENTS

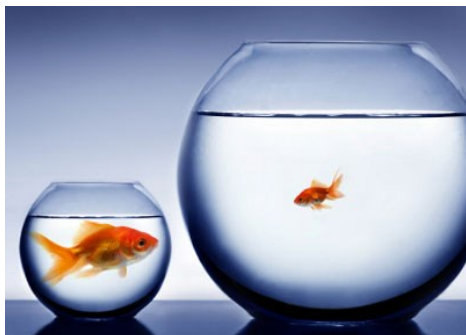
- "Don't get into an argument over differences of opinions." Romans 14:1 GWT
- "Stop grumbling among yourselves," John 6:43 NIV
- Dear Church: Let's be Christians, not controversialists.

II. LISTEN TO THE LORD'S VOICE WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THE COMPARISON TRAP

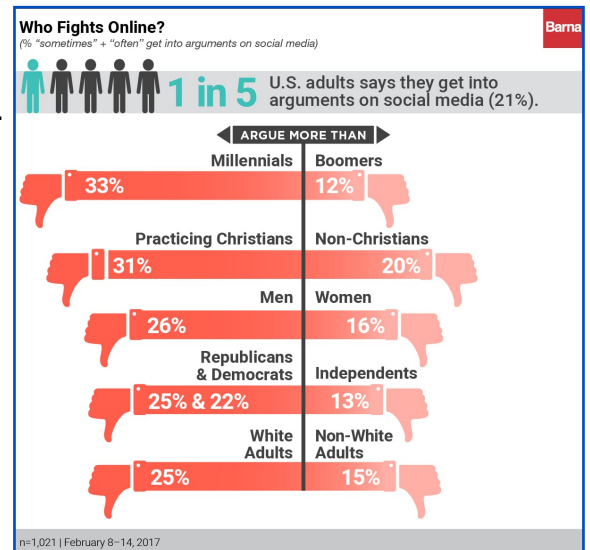
- Dear Seattle: Comparing never ends well.
- "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" Romans 8:1 NIV
- "Stop judging." Matthew 7:1 ISV

III. LISTEN TO THE LORD'S VOICE ABOVE ALL

- The one who comes from above is ABOVE ALL. John 3:31a NIV / HE > ME
- ... because of the **bridegroom's VOICE**: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. **He must increase, but I must decrease.** John 3:29b-30 KJV
- The apostles said to the Lord, **"Increase our faith!"** Luke 17:5 NIV



- Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the WORD [rhema: living VOICE] of God. Romans 10:17 NKJV
- "My sheep LISTEN TO MY VOICE; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." - Jesus, John 10:27-28 NIV
- 5 CS' Test: How to Know it's Really the Lord's Voice:
 - 1) Common Sense
 - 2) Circumstantial Signs
 - 3) Counsel of the Saints
 - 4) Compelling Spirit
 - 5) Commanding Scripture



- How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you... Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a VOICE behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Isaiah 30:19b; 21 NIV
- The Lesson: **Listen to the Lord's voice above all...**
 - ◇ *Loss, Lack & Loneliness:* "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." Psalm 23:1 NIV / "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5b KJV / "I am with you always." Matthew 28:20b NIV
 - ◇ *Relationship Matters:* "Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them!" Luke 6:31 MSG / "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12 KJV
 - ◇ *Financial Hardship:* "Generous hands are blessed hands because they give bread to the poor." Proverbs 22:9 MSG / "My God will meet all your needs according to the glorious riches in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19 NIV
 - ◇ *Discouragement and Despair:* "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." Psalm 30:5b NKJV / "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13 NIV
 - ◇ *Purposelessness:* "I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out – plans to take care of you, not abandon you, plans to give you the future you hope for." Jeremiah 29:11 MSG / "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28 NIV
 - ◇ *Anxiety, Fear & Worry:* "Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life." Philippians 4:6-7 MSG / "What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31 NIV
 - ◇ *Uncertainty:* "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:37-39 NIV

SALVATION PRAYER:

Dear Jesus, I repent of my sin. Please be my Savior and Lord. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Now what are you waiting for? Get up, BE BAPTIZED and wash your sins away, calling on his name.
Acts 22:16 NIV