

THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT THE NEWS

NARROW MINDED NEARSIGHTED NEWS SYNDROME

"For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing."

~ Acts 17:21

1. "This Just In ..."

- a. Athens was culturally engaged - Acts 17:16
- b. Paul caused a social media stir and got some clicks – Acts 17:17-20
- c. Why did they click on Paul? He was new - Acts 17:21-22
- d. Daily - 500m tweets, 4m hours of video on YT, 4.3b facebook posts
- e. Lockdown decreased scriptural engagement, increased media consumption (Barna)
 - i. (Pew) 89% watch tv or movies daily/weekly, 55% prayed, 29% read Bible.
- f. 92% own Bibles, 70% Christian, 31% 1xmonth, 24% believe it, 9% daily, 6% Biblical
- g. Too much news create narrow minded nearsighted news syndrome ← spiritual issues

2. News as Education

- a. 60% of believers think the pandemic is a sign from God
- b. 40% get news online, 45% tv – social media was least informed, easiest to deceive
- c. Access to information not the same as knowing; knowing not the same as wisdom.
- d. News is a bad place to get educated – read a book instead – 1 Tim 4:13

3. News as Entertainment

- a. *"bread and circuses"* – Rome went from informed to entertained.
- b. 2018 study – American spent avg 11 hrs a day looking at screens
- c. Watching news about an event can create problems similar to going through it.
 - i. It can increase PTSD, anxiety, depression, health risk, and affect your views
- d. Good news does not gain audience: "utopia newspapers are dull", negativity bias
- e. More reported changed prevalence perception: brain cancer, deaths, framing effects
- f. Rejoice in the Lord, think on these things - Ps 143:5, Phi 4:4,8, 1 Cor 16:15

4. News as Distraction

- a. Your attention is the product – you give it up for a cheap price. Redeem it - Eph 5:16
 - i. Edward Bernays - "enduring effort to shape events to influence people"
- b. News is tabloid, gossip, reality tv, jerry springer – we have an appetite for distraction
 - i. Give attention to ministry Col 4:17, thyself and the doctrine - 1 Tim 4:16
- c. Too much can distort your perspective – Matt 4:4, 1 Tim 4:1
- d. Too much can distract you from the mind of Christ and things of Christ – Phi 2:21
- e. Too much can diminish your true knowledge/wisdom – Col 2:3
- f. Too much can deceive you to think everything is happening now – Eph 2:7
- g. Some Athenians clicked subscribe, many clicked away, few believed - Acts 17:30-34