

# Listener Concerned Dr. Jennings Is Being Foolish

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | January 28, 2021



Over the past six months, I have received periodic emails like the one below expressing disappointment with me or taking offense over something I have written or taught. I hope my discussion below will be healing and helpful to those that have been disappointed or hurt.

The email:

A group of us have been blessed by your wisdom over the last 18 months but we are dismayed and stunned by the utter foolishness of your article "The World's Wisdom Is Foolishness". You do NOT have to know someone personally to see the flaws in their character. When president Trump failed to concede the election he lost, then created a BIG LIE to convince his followers that the election had been stolen from them, then tried to get the Secretary of State of Georgia to lie and give him 11,700 votes so he could "win" Georgia, then had his followers attack the Capital where 5 people died, then ignored the country for two months while playing golf, while up to 4,000 people were dying every day, we don't need to sit down and get to know him personally to know that he is a very sick and flawed human being. We weren't duped but it sounds

like maybe you were. Most of us have lost a lot of respect for you, did you drink the Trump Kool aid too?

First, I want to thank this person for taking the time to email me their concerns. This email creates the opportunity for discussion and lets me know how some people hear what I am saying. So thank you for sending it, and I hope you will read this blog.

When I read this email, my heart was filled with sadness, real grief, that a person or group of people who have followed us for more than a year would misunderstand my position so seriously. The first misunderstanding (and I do understand how it happened, but it is still a misunderstanding) is thinking that the blog, *The World's Wisdom Is Foolishness*, was about Mr. Trump. The purpose of the blog was not to promote or attack Mr. Trump, but to apply Bible principles to recent events in order to hone our discernment skills. I purposely waited until after the election to post the blog to prevent people from concluding that I was advocating for the president.

It seems the core complaint of this email centers around the premise of my blog that we can't know someone's character without actually knowing the person. They cite what they believe is evidence of Mr. Trump's character to make their case that they are right to judge Mr. Trump as being "a very sick and flawed human being." They suggest I have been duped and most of their group has lost respect for me.

Again, thank you for sending this email and giving me the opportunity to explore your concerns. I wish we could have this discussion in person so that I could hear your responses, the tone of your voice, and see the look in your eye. I may misperceive from the email only, but it sounds that you may be both hurt and angry. I would love to ask, what or who has hurt you? What are you angry about?

When I teach, it is my goal to always uplift Jesus, to promote God's kingdom, and to be as truthful, accurate, and winsome as possible. But I know that I am a flawed human being, a sinner saved by God's grace, with finite knowledge, and it is inevitable that I will not know all the facts, that new truths and evidences will arise, and better ways of presenting things will come forth - therefore, I pray for a heart that loves truth so I won't let my pride keep me from giving up old ideas for better more accurate ones. Challenges like your email gives me the opportunity to do so.

One of the things that your email has caused me to do is to reflect upon using modern events as a template to discuss God's methods and principles. It seems safer to talk about the Bible stories and show hypocrisy in the Pharisees of Jesus' day than in church leaders today, to discuss political intrigue and the propaganda of the Dark Ages than in today's current events. It appears when application of some of God's principles are brought to our real-time issues - whether it be abortion, gay rights, border walls, race relations - that the exploration of these issues in application to our daily lives becomes too emotional for some and is perceived as our ministry taking the focus off of Jesus, the gospel, the truth about God's character.

I am looking very seriously at this concern; I don't want the center of our focus to ever be anything other than the truth about God's character of love. I think of the apostle Paul after his

academic argument in Athens and his decision, from that point forward, to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

So, perhaps I need to be less active in examining God's principles in relation to real-time events. Yet, I get more positive feedback from those who appreciate the real-time application than negative feedback from those who don't; and it is clear that examining current events makes the issue under discussion real and reaches people. This email demonstrates how my blog touched something in their heart. It made the issue real for them and got them thinking. So, I am still evaluating this question and appreciate your feedback as it has stimulated me to do so.

Will you, emailer, be willing to examine your email and consider the evidence of what it reveals?

The core premise of the email is that you can know that Mr. Trump is a "sick and flawed human being" by the following:

- failed to concede the election he lost
- then created a BIG LIE to convince his followers that the election had been stolen from them
- tried to get the Secretary of State of Georgia to lie and give him 11,700 votes so he could "win" Georgia,
- had his followers attack the Capitol, where 5 people died
- ignored the country for two months while playing golf, while up to 4,000 people were dying every day

In life, there are facts and there are interpretations of facts. How many of the things listed above are facts, and how many are interpretations of facts? There are several facts woven in among a lot of interpretations.

If we cannot tell the difference between facts and interpretations, what some might call "spin," we are extremely vulnerable to being manipulated by others.

Consider this thought experiment in regard to the list you sent against the president: If you were under oath in a court of law and were giving testimony, what could you personally swear to know is true; what, on that list you cited, could you verify as a firsthand witness or that you possessed direct evidence of, such as recordings, pictures, or documents? Of all the things listed above, what could you swear that you personally know to be true beyond a reasonable doubt from direct evidence? The facts are these:

- Mr. Trump refused to concede the election
- Mr. Trump made a phone call to the Georgia Secretary of State
- Mr. Trump played golf
- A group of people stormed the Capitol building and some died

Everything else is interpretation or spin, inserting or deriving meaning without verification that such a conclusion is accurate.

We don't know whether Trump's allegations of fraud are true or false because no court has allowed evidence to be presented. All court rulings have been procedural rulings, not evidentiary rulings.

I don't know whether sufficient fraud happened to change the outcome or not, but I would like to see the evidence one way or the other. I am okay with either outcome, if the evidence supports it. But what has happened is declarations by media and other pundits without evidence, and many accept these declarations as evidence.

Years ago, Bill Clinton made a declaration that he did not have relations with "that woman." At the time, the media acted differently than today; it investigated the evidence and Monica's dress refuted the declaration. However, what would have happened if the media ignored Monica and the dress, if the media refused to examine the evidence and repeated over and over again the claim of Mr. Clinton and accused all who wanted to examine the evidence of denying the truth and embracing a hoax?

The process of making claims or declaration and then refusing to investigate the evidence is Satan's method. Satan made declarations about God but has never provided any evidence to support his claims because all the evidence is on God's side. God's method is to present the truth in love and leave others free. Satan's method is to silence voices that oppose his false views because the voices of truth will destroy the false narratives.

Which group in the current debate wants more evidence revealed, and which group wants to prevent open hearings, whether in court or in the media? Which group shuts down free speech, censors voices of opposition, restricts liberties?

Again, I don't know whether Trump actually won and was deprived the victory because of fraud or not; I have not seen the evidence, but I do see the evidence of the two methods being employed. One side wants openness, investigation, documentation, first-hand testimony; the other side wants none of that and wants anyone who pursues the evidence to be silenced - some have even called for re-education camps. A discerning person would be concerned about such tactics and ask, "Why don't they want an honest examination of the evidence?"

So, in the list you cited I find very little evidence of Mr. Trump's character. I don't know his motive for refusing to concede the election - was it selfish, only caring about personal power, or was it altruistic, believing his policies were best for the nation and wanting to save the nation? Either conclusion is interpretation of the facts not actual fact. The same is true with every example you cited, there is no direct evidence of his character.

Perhaps this is why Jesus said,

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye (Matthew 7:1-5 NIV84).

## **Christian Principles**

Now, let's get down to the most important Christian point - Do you love Mr. Trump? What would be your reaction if you found out when you get to heaven that Mr. Trump is your next-door neighbor? Would you be happy to have him there?

As we embrace the principles of truth, love, and freedom by focusing our eyes upon Jesus and the truth about God, are we not to love each other more? Are we not to love our enemies and pray for those who abuse us?

I hope those of you who have been disappointed with me and our ministry will find it in your hearts to love me as a brother in Christ, to pray for me, and to embrace the principles of God, of truth, love and freedom. We don't have to agree on every point or position, but we do need to love each other, give each other the freedom to see things differently. So it is okay if you disagree with me on these points, but don't let your heart be infected with anger or disdain or lack of love for me or any human being.

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