



**Educate
+ Engage**



WHO ARE YOU
LISTENING
TO?



Competing Voices

OVERVIEW:

We are surrounded by voices that are creating more and more noise. We must learn to shut out the wrong voices and focus in on what God is saying.

Scripture Passage

Isaiah 66:6 (ESV)

The sound of an uproar from the city! A sound from the temple! The sound of the LORD, rendering recompense to his enemies!

EDUCATE

There are many perspectives in the world, and everyone has their own worldview. A worldview can be defined as the way you perceive the world, how you believe it operates, why you think events occur as they do, and how you see your purpose within it. There are numerous worldviews, including some that might be considered unusual, wacky, or even weird.

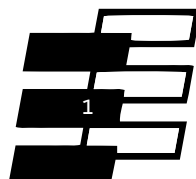
What is the strangest or most outrageous view of the world that someone might believe?

Point 1: We naturally prioritize competing voices based on our worldview.

Worldviews can range far and wide and be influenced by people, education, culture, and social media. For example, an American worldview might be that America is the best, that the leaders and anyone can become anything. To contrast that might be a Westernized worldview more rooted in things like capitalism and democracy. Many worldviews even affect the church like a religious, atheist, agnostic, spiritual, or mystical worldview. And of course people have a political worldview some may label as right wing, left wing, center wing, or independent. People can have more than one worldview, and in fact you may have a worldview and preference on which gaming system is the best. Nintendo? Playstation? Xbox? Computer?

But what happens when the ideology of how we view the world, how we think it operates, and why we think it does what it does affects our theology? It can distract, detour, or put us on a path that creates confusion. This is where we find ourselves at a crossroads, bombarded by the messages of the world to persuade us and direct our behavior.

We live surrounded by too many voices! All screaming listen to me and look here. All wanting to direct our attention to messages on media and ads on our games. Have you ever wondered how people decide which voices to listen to?



Lesson 1

Is it what sounds the best to them? It could be the voice that makes the most sense and is the most convenient. Is it the voice based on what the majority says? It could be the voice of what everyone else is doing. How many times have you seen people do what is trending? Is it the echo chamber of the voices in your life? Like when people follow the voices of their friends and follow what they say?

Point 2: We should seek to isolate the voice of God and give it our absolute attention.

The prophet Isaiah gave guidance to people who struggled like us. In the sixty-sixth chapter he said it like this, "A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies." The Lord declares that there are competing voices in a time where they didn't have nearly as many competing voices.

He said there's a voice of noise from the city, a voice from the Temple and the voice of the Lord. I submit to you the toxic prognosis: too many voices. When we can't discern the voice, any voice will do and every voice will sound like the right voice. The voices that say do this... don't do that... go here, go there, don't say this, don't share that, might be offensive, might get offended, how dare they. Too many voices cause confusion.

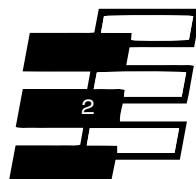
Competing voices say do this or do that. Go here and it doesn't matter if you go there. These voices are worrisome. Everyone is susceptible and no one is exempt from the dangerous delusions of a competing voice. Consider the most perfect place on earth.

If someone asked you what the most perfect place on earth would be, what would you say?

Point 3: The Word of God is the most important voice.

In the most perfect place ever created, that only a few eyes have seen, there still was the problem of a competing voice. You can't eliminate competing voices, but you can learn how to discern them. Even in the Garden of Eden a competing voice was manipulating the very words of God.

In Genesis chapter 3, the sacred text says, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" As the serpent spoke, he questioned the voice of God with his own voice. The competing voices caused a confusion that brought into question the authenticity of the word of God. It caused two people who were created by God and were frequently in the presence of God to question the very words of God. They had heard the voice of God and the directives of God and even they were confused when competing voices were present.



Lesson 1

If competing voices happen in a perfect place, they can happen at any place. Our worldview can never be contrary to the Word of God.

Closing

Everybody is confronted with voices from everywhere, but just because they are presented doesn't mean they have to be adopted. Not every voice is worth listening to!

ENGAGE

Make a decision today that the Word of God is the ultimate voice in our lives. Let us pray today about making the word of God the loudest and most important voice we hear.

