**For Release Wednesday, November 4, 2020**

**Capitol View**

**Commentary by J.L. Schmidt**

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**Some Fitting Words from Long Ago for Times Like These**

I’m going to speculate that as you read this you are still uncertain who won and who lost the national and state elections. Definitely the national election.

Not only has it been quite the year, what with the pandemic and all, it’s been quite the election. Presidential debates were shouting matches. Local elections were dredged in negative campaigning – apparently research says that we respond better to negatives – and name-calling appears to have become a bigger national pastime than baseball.

In the midst of turmoil, let me share some words from a letter written between A.D. 63 and 65. The writer was the Apostle Paul and the letter was written to Titus to encourage him in his ministry. I find it fitting all these thousands of years later as guidance in this unsettling time.

“Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone. At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.” – Titus 3:1-3 (NIV)

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Yes, I know that’s a tall order. But it’s an action plan that we need now, perhaps more than ever. Submit to authority, obey, do good, be peaceable and considerate and gentle. No more slander. No more foolishness. No more hatred.

This will work if we forget the differences that we have let divide us. No more prejudice toward race, color, creed or political affiliation. I don’t care if your side won or lost, or how you perceived it. We’re all in this together.

If it helps, take a week off social media. No tweeting, no Instagramming, no Facebooking. Turn off the TV. Listen to music. Talk to your neighbors. Talk to your spouse and your children. Call a friend. Read a good book. Take a walk. Pray, meditate, bake some cookies.

I like the way Lincoln Journal Star columnist Don Walton put it in a recent column: “Let's cast our votes and find out who the winner is; whether the results will be accepted by all sides; what the heck happens if they aren't; whether we are going to face drawn-out agony in the courts or even worse in the streets; or whether we can just move ahead.”

 I agree with him that “It didn't used to be this way. Election results were accepted; the losers called the winners to congratulate them. And life moved on.”

I know this sounds good and looks good on paper. Is this going to be the year it actually happens? Well, it can. It’s up to all of us to do our part. That’s you and me.

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So, let’s review. Submit to authority, obey, do good, be peaceable and considerate and gentle. No more slander. No more foolishness. No more hatred.

Give it a shot. With the holidays approaching, consider it a gift.

 *J.L. Schmidt has been covering Nebraska government and politics since 1979. He has been a registered Independent for 20 years.*

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