

## POPULARITY POLLS

Proverbs 29:23 ... "A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor."

You may read in newspapers, or hear on radio or television the outcome of polls, which supposedly are questions asked of strangers to solicit their opinions. For instance, a poll may be taken to reveal how many Filipinos support the president, or how many desire that the country change to a federal form of government. Polls are taken to demonstrate how people will vote in an election and how they want their representatives to vote in Congress.

However, polls are flawed. Asking a few random persons their feelings on a matter does not guarantee that a majority of people feel the same way. Most polls are paid for by the same people being voted upon or who have a personal stake in the outcome of a bill in Congress. A stranger may be asked, "John Doe wants the best for the Philippines, doesn't he?" or "Do you support federalism to improve the country?" or "Should the sin of divorce be legalized?" In the first question, you are told that John Doe wants the best for the country and you are asked if you agree. The second question asks if you want to improve the country. The third question challenges you to support the legalization of sin. All of these questions express a bias and compel you to support the right answer.

When polls are taken to show how people feel about a politician, it is really about how popular the person is, not his or her performance or character. Therefore, many polls are simply executed out of pride or to sway public opinion. If a poll for a candidate reveals that a majority of voters would vote for him or her, that poll will help sway the opinions of voters who have not yet decided. Polls do more to control public opinion, than to reveal public opinion.

If Jesus had taken a poll of people in Israel, I expect the majority of Jews would have expressed support for him. And, that is exactly what the Jewish leaders and Roman government were afraid of. They did not want people to listen to Jesus instead of them. So, they killed him. If you want to know what people think of you, do not ask them. Asking people what they think about you, or creating situations in which people are too embarrassed to be honest about their feelings toward you, will result in false praise. Your purpose in asking is only to support your pride. Instead, be a Godly person who cares about others, who is honest and dependable, and who is charitable and kind. In due time, you will learn what people truly think of you without asking, and if they praise you, you will have earned it, not because you forced it.

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