

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Christian, You're Not Voting?

Bill Brinkworth

America is a wonderful country. Many gave their lives and others suffered great loss, so that we would have a country where we could have some control over the government. Our early forefathers knew what it was like to have the government control everything by dictatorships and monarchies. They designed our ruling body so that it would be fair and unlike any other system in the world.

Yet today many take for granted what was given to them. Many do not participate in maintaining the freedoms that they inherited. Exercising the right to vote is one way to do that. Here are some of the many excuses some give for not voting in an election:

“It won't make any difference, so why bother voting.”

By not voting, you are not even trying to make a difference in the government. All those who can vote in this country have the opportunity to vote for whom they think will do the better job. As a Christian, we should have God's wisdom on what is right and what is wrong according to the teachings of the Bible. Its wisdom and insight into what pleases our heavenly Father should guide us through life's

many decisions. By not trying to make a decision at the election polls, we are letting others, even the ungodly, make decisions for us.

God commands us to make a difference in the world. He compares Christian living to the seasoning, salt. Without salt in our diets, our bodies would not function properly. Without salt on our food, it would not have the taste it could have. Hidden in the closet and still in its shaker, salt is useless. A non-voting Christian is much like that useless salt.

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”

Matthew 5:13

The discernment a Christian has gained from reading and obeying God’s commands should show him that adultery, abortion, drugs, immoral behavior, and other sins are intolerable to God. The Christian’s vote at election time should be a vote to show that he does not approve of a nominee’s practice or philosophy of wrongdoing.

In 2000, the presidential race was determined by the close voting at Florida’s polls. The Florida Supreme Court-ordered recount determined that President Bush had won the race by 493 votes. Just a few votes did make a difference.

“I’m not even registered to vote.” We have a constitution that many countries dream of having. One of the rights it gives us is the right to vote (Amendments 15, 19, 24, and 26). The right to vote was fought for and not just given to us in America.

“God doesn’t want me to get mixed up in government”. Where did you get that idea? In the Bible, Jesus even said to give to the government what is due the government. One of the unique opportunities we have to give our government moral stability is to vote. By not taking advantage of that right, you are not being the good citizen you are supposed to be.

“And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.” Luke 20:25

The Word of God even commands us to pray, listen to, and respect our government:

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2 Also: Ezra 6:10, Romans 13:1

“God is in control, it doesn’t matter what leader gets in.” God wants all to obey Him all the time. He wants us to choose a godly lifestyle and gives us freedom to do so. Unfortunately, most used their freedom wrongly, and that is why sin is rampant. If God had His way, there would be no sin; but He is allowing us to make those decisions for

now. Obviously, we are letting Him down by tolerating what He would not.

Israel's early history included a time when He was in control, but even then, there were God-appointed leaders. Soon, men were picking their own officials without seeking His opinion. This is often happening today. A vote is our Christian opportunity that God has allowed us to have; to have a say in whom we want to rule.

"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."

Proverbs 29:2

"For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged." Proverbs 28:2

"God doesn't want me to stand up against the government that He put in office. If Christians did not vote, chances are His will was not followed in electing an official. He sometimes lets us get what we deserve by our improper choices or lack of influence. Besides, many in the Bible stood up to change what the government was doing. Moses stood against Pharaoh's ill treatment of God's people, Israel. Paul let all know he was a Roman citizen and had his rights under their laws (Acts 22:25-29). We are to stand up for the privileges God has allowed us to have.

"I don't want to cross the 'separation of church and state' line." The Constitution of America never said that we are not to get involved in politics. It does have a provision (First Amendment) to keep the government from

intervening in the affairs of the church:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Many of the framers of our early government were godly men. They did want godly influence to continue to make America a country God would bless.

God has given us a wonderful country. When a country drifts from godly principles, anarchy, mob-decision, and sin dominate its course. We have an opportunity to vote for candidates that think more in line with what God would want. Admittedly, it sometimes is an exercise in selecting the lesser of multiple evils, but isn't a Christian more qualified than an unsaved person is to make that decision? If we do not intervene, the world will go in a godless course. How will the ungodly know unless we, as Christians, show them what God approves or disapproves of by our vote?

“If we forget we are one nation under God, we will be a nation gone under!”

Who Should a Christian Vote For?

Bill Brinkworth

When one is saved, he should be for what God is for and against what He is against. We should be as Christ-like as possible.

With this in mind, if Christ were voting, (and He is through us, since we are His ambassadors — II Cor. 5:20), how would He vote? He would surely vote against those standing against biblical principles and vote for those standing for godly principles.

Since there are no candidates that make 100% of their decisions based on biblical guidelines, our vote should be for one that is the closest to using these guidelines.

Granted, it is getting harder to determine who is lined up the closest to the biblical standard, and in some instances it is a matter of choosing the lesser of two evils. However, there are several areas of a nominee's philosophy, life, and standards that can be examined before casting a vote for them. Here are several:

- What is their personal life like? If the nominee's life includes acts of adultery, drunkenness, filthy language, dishonesty, lack of attending church, and other signs of wanton ungodly living, how can he be expected to make decisions based on biblical principles and standards?
- Where does he verbally stand on the things of God? Does He speak about his faith? If he is involved in a church or religion that does not concur with what the Bible teaches, he cannot be expected to make biblically correct decisions.
- What is the value of the nominee's word? Does he do what he says? Is he double-tongued, "politically correct", trying to make his words pleasing to everyone? Is he always changing what he says depending on who his audience is? Does his word

mean anything?

- Is the politician more interested in being elected than in leading the country in a moral, bible-principled direction?
- Where does he stand on abortion? God is against the taking of the innocent lives of babies! Life does start in the womb: Gen. 25:21-23, Ex. 21:22-23, Jer. 1:5, Ps. 139:15-16 ... Any official that has such a low esteem for the taking of innocent lives should not be a person anyone would want making decisions about euthanasia, healthcare for those that are older, abortion, etc.
- Where do the nominees stand on rewarding citizens for not working and getting government support? God wants us not to be slothful, and instead to be workers (Prov. 12:11, Pr. 13:4, 11, 23, Prov. 20:13, Prov. 22:29).
- Do they believe that each man should learn the consequences of his wrong decisions, or do they think that other people (government's money) should help finance their mistakes?
- Where do the politicians stand on punishing crime? God punishes sin. Our legislators should also be strict on crime.
- Are they for things God is for and against the things He is against? Where do they stand on homosexuality, loss of freedom by making more demands on citizens, obeying the existing laws (constitution, and other laws that are already on the books), getting the government to take the place of God (by allowing the people to turn to the government for provision, rather than God)?
- Who are their associates? You can tell much about a

person by whom they associate with. If one's closest associates have godless lifestyles, and are morally living improperly, one can assume that kind of lifestyle does not really bother the politician, and they would never cast a vote condemning it. A person that is truly against immoral lifestyles would not gravitate to people living immorally.

- Where do they stand on drugs and alcohol? God wants us to take care of our bodies (I Cor. 3:16).

What does the nominee's life show onlookers? If you voted for the want-to-be-leader, would you be picking a choice that abides as close to godly principles as the choice allows? Would Jesus consider voting for that nominee?

“A man that stands for nothing, will fall for anything!”

Christ's Attitude Toward His Country

W. Jennings

Jesus was a model citizen:

1. He called the country He lived in His “own” country: Mat. 13:54,57.
2. He kept his country's laws and refused to be made a king or to start a political revolution: John 6:15.
3. He recognized the right of taxation (Mark 12:17), and paid taxes (Mat. 17:24-27).
4. He was loyal to national institutions: temple, synagogue, etc.
5. He recognized the first claim of His country (Mat. 10:6, Luke 24:47).
6. He warned it of its perils (Mat. 23:37-39).

7. He rebuked its officials (Mat. 23:1-36).
8. He wept over its sins and impending doom (Luke 19:41-44).

“Corrupt leaders are elected, not by bribes, but by apathy!”