

# Christian Voting?

One of the most misunderstood issues in the church today is the subject of voting. It is our belief that the Bible overwhelmingly expects the Christian not to vote for political candidates, or to participate in politics on any level. Why?

## OUR CITIZENSHIP ISN'T "HERE"

Consider that our citizenship is not "of this world." Philippians 3:20 "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ," It goes another step further when you look at 2Corinthians 5:20, and it says that we are, "we are ambassadors for Christ," An ambassador by definition is a diplomatic official accredited to a *foreign* sovereign or government. They go from their home country and go to another country, where they do not necessarily have any standing outside of being an ambassador. They serve as an official representative of the country where they come from. When we look at this from a spiritual point of view, specifically from a Christian point of view, what does it mean? An ambassador *represents* their president, or their state, or their government. It's a position *by appointment*. This is not an elected office. You are appointed. You're not a citizen of the country that you serve in. We already saw that we are a citizen elsewhere. We are ambassadors. We are representatives of the country that we come from to another, where we represent Christ. We are His ambassadors. Even in this world it is understood that the rights of ambassadors are limited in the country that they go to. An ambassador does not have, among other things, the right to vote or to participate in the government where he is sent. He is a citizen of a different country, and for him to vote is wrong. Even in this world's affairs, if a person attempts to influence politics in a foreign country, it causes major *scandal!* How much more for us? Our citizenship is not of this country, though we live in it. We are ambassadors for Christ. This alone rules us out of becoming involved with politics or voting, no matter how "good" the cause seems to be. Certainly we can *say* what *our* "Head of government" Jesus Christ would have us say about an issue, but it stops there. But, why wouldn't you want to vote for a *good* candidate?

## VOTING IS FOR THE WHOLE PERSON

If you were to vote for someone it would have to be for the whole person, not the lesser of two evils. 1Thessalonians 5:21 says, "Test all things; hold fast what is good." Then it says in verse 22, "Abstain from every form of evil." That's pretty clear! You don't accept *any* type of evil. You "abstain," you don't give them your vote. That's a even terminology that we use today, people "abstain from voting." One of the definitions of the word *abstain* is "to refrain from casting one's vote!" We are absolutely to be staying away from *every* form of evil. If you look at a candidate and you say, "Oh, this man or this woman running for office is great in every way, ...except for the fact that they want to \_\_\_\_\_" (Legalize: drugs, improper sexual practices, gambling [no, it *isn't* "gaming!"]; allow the unborn to be killed, tolerate assisted suicide, etc.) You look at it, and you have to

recognize just *one thing* such as that, disqualifies them from our support, else we would be supporting evil! If you have a candidate, and they act in, or advocate an ungodly idea or way of life, you cannot look the other way. Especially if they *openly admit it*. You cannot settle for less in a leader at any level. (Exodus 18:21) 2 Timothy further highlights the fact that you can't vote for just the good part in somebody. I think we all recognize this. It says in 2 Timothy 3:1, "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:" Then verses 2-3 talk about the attitudes that will be extant in the end time. Then in verse 5 it says, "having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" You cannot turn *towards* people like that. You cannot give them your *vote*, your support. You cannot say, "OK, yes, I can endorse them. They have the *appearance* of godliness they're supposed to have." They may have a certain amount of "good," and no one is denying that. But it's all the rest that presents an awkward situation for a Christian. To say, "Yes, I'm going to put my stamp of approval on this candidate *as an ambassador*." Essentially saying, "Yes, this represents the view of my head of state *my God*, that I'm representing." You just can't do that! *We* are not capable of judging a leader or candidate! We do not know the heart of *anybody*. Who knows the thoughts and motivations of people? Only God! (Psalm 44:21) We can only go on what we see and hear, not being able to know what the *real* person seeking election is like. But, isn't that better than letting the other candidate win? That would seem to make more sense.

*There is a way that seems right to us.*

What does it say in Proverbs? That way ends in death! (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25) It's saying we need to have a realization of our *inability* to judge, (or vote) correctly. It says in Jeremiah 10:23 that, "It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps." People *cannot* do that. Your own, much less somebody else's! Isaiah 55:8-9 says, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts." This is *God* speaking! God has a strategy that he's working out. He's arranging things, events and happenings, so it ends up the way *He* wants it to be. The way that He goes about it does not necessarily correspond with the way that *we* would go about it, even *if we knew* what He was doing! The way that we think is not the way that God thinks. We may believe that what we are doing is all right, that this person or that person, given what we know of them, is OK. We may think that they are good enough. But God is the only one that can be the true judge of this. He's the only one that knows!

*If you leave it to people what happens?*

God did that for a time, he left it to His people to judge for themselves concerning a king. Who did they want. They wanted someone like Saul! Because he was handsome, that's what the scripture says, he was tall, a head taller than everybody else, that's what they wanted, just like the countries around them. God said if you do this, and really want a king, I'll tell you before you decide, certain things are going to happen, and you're *not*

*going to like it.* They still continued anyway. Guess what happened? Taxes, money wasted on government spending, land confiscated for government use, bloated civil service, and military conscription, all *did* happen. Just as God said! (1Samuel 8:11-19) And eventually the king went bad. (1Samuel 15:26) Even though he started out good. There are no guarantees, people make choices. Leaders make personal choices that can end up with bad consequences.

*God provides the next leader.*

It was David. And that's in 1Samuel 16:1-13, you can read it. We'll just highlight part of it, and do a synopsis of the story, but God sent Samuel to the town of Bethlehem. When Samuel came into town people are trembling because they were afraid, and wondered, "Are you coming here peaceably?" They knew God was with him, and they knew that whatever he told them God said to him *would happen*. No one had any idea why he was there. He says, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." (This was a ceremonial butchering, cooking and eating of an animal before God.) Quite a treat, and a celebration of sorts, and an honor to be invited. You had to be "clean" physically and ceremonially. He invites Jesse and his boys. Now to decide. He goes through, and he looks at Eliab who is the oldest. He says, "Come here." Samuel thought, "Surely this is the Lord's anointed!" But it wasn't. Not even Samuel a man of God, a devout man of God, knew. So then what happens? He goes to number two. Nope. And on he goes. He called the third oldest. Nope. He went through all the sons. Presumably presented in the order they were born. Four, five, six, and seven! All the way up to number seven! But none of them were it. The Lord looks on the heart. He says, "The Lord's not chosen any of these!" He's somewhat bewildered, and has to come to the conclusion, is there anybody else? "Oh, yeah, well, there's (only) David. But he's out keeping the sheep." That was his job. The lowest of family tasks, often given to the younger children. They go get him, and David proved to be *that man!* And who was he? In the New Testament book of Acts, it says that he was a man after God's own heart. God was able to look into the heart of David and see that he was a type of man that he wanted to rule Israel. God didn't look on appearance, how tall and good looking he was. People look on the outward appearance, and this is what is being shown, God is able to look *inside*, to the mind and motivations of an individual. We cannot look into the hearts that way. Yet we may think surely this is a candidate whom God has put there. After all, He is God of the whole world isn't He?

## **THIS IS SATAN'S WORLD**

Consider this, right now this is *Satan's world*. Ephesians 2:2, and 2Corinthians 4:4, shows that he is allowed to be the *god of this age*, for this time. Even in the temptation, with Christ and Satan. (Matthew 4:1-11) "Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory." Satan said, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." What did Christ say? Did he try to say, "They're not yours to give"? No. That's *not* what he said. Because they *were* his to give! They are Satan's *right now*. You know how

Christ handled it. It was kind of a ridiculous situation. Here is Satan offering all this to Him, and all Christ had to do is say, "No." And it's his anyway! Without Satan in it! Which was obviously better! But it is Satan's world to rule at this moment, at this point in time. He has been given a certain amount of leeway. He actually can put people into or out of positions in government. God allows it within limits for now, for His reasons. Satan will do anything to try to totally get his way. He has *his* big overall plan of what he's wants to do also, against God. In Hosea 8:4, God gives us a warning in this regard. He says, "They set up kings, but not by Me; They made princes, but I did not acknowledge them." They were not the ones that God would have. Overall, God is going to make His propose for humanity all work out. But again, who is it that is putting these people up? Who were they installing as leaders? The *wrong* people, not the people that God approved of.

*Would God allow an ungodly person to be in charge?*

There are times when God, since He is totally in charge, *will* allow an ungodly person or a "wrong" person to be set up as the leader. For *His reasons*. (Jeremiah 25:9; Daniel 5:18) Reasons God does not necessarily share with us! What we need to consider is that, sometimes, if we were to vote for (or against) somebody, we may be playing a part *directly* in Satan's scheme! If Satan is setting up some scheme, we, by voting for some person, albeit well intentioned, may be voting in a way *helping* whatever Satan is doing! We need to make every effort to *separate* ourselves from Satan, because Satan *is* the god of this world, it's politics, it's religions. That's why we cannot be any part of it, and why we must come *out* of it, and be separate! Christ spoke in John 17:16,18 where it says, "They are not of the world." (Speaking of his people, Christians.) He said this again in His prayer to God, saying, "just as I am not of the world." Christ was not of this world, we are not supposed to be a part of this world. ("World," here meaning it's political systems and societies. It's ideas of morality and ways.) In verse 18 he says, "As You sent Me into the world." We still have to live here, in this world. He said He sent us into the world as well, but we are not to be a *part* of the world, a part of the world's way of life. He expects us to live *in* it, yet not be part *of* it. And He gives us a further warning in Revelation 18:4, where he says, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues." If you are going to involve yourself in this world's politics and society, then you will receive the penalties that the world will receive, and will not be necessarily under God's protection.

## **GOD IS TOTALLY IN CHARGE**

This has been said already, but we need to realize that God is *completely* in charge. He intervenes, as it suits his purpose, in anything He wants to. Interveneing when necessary in the affairs of: nations, of people, of governments, and politics, to ensure that specific parts of *His* plan are fulfilled in the way that He wants. He is directing these things. Satan can only do what he does within *limits*. Daniel 4:17 says, "This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the

living may know,” here's what they may know, “That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.” It says that God is *actively engaged* in government, in leaders, in managing and making things turn out a specific way, overriding Satan’s influence *when needed*. In Daniel 2:21 it says, “He removes kings and raises up kings;” It says *God* does that. That is within his control, that is what he keeps to Himself, what He says that He's going to do. Christ told Pilate in John 19:11, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.” He's saying that all the power that these men who are ruling have, *comes from God*. Where did the power come from? It comes from *above* so a vote in these governmental elections by Christians, or by his disciples, is at best ineffectual! Because God is going to make things happen the way that he sees fit, but not necessarily the way that *we* see fit. At worst, you could be going *against the will of God!* Do we always know what the will of God is? No we don't. In fact, part of the sample prayer is, “*Your* will be done.” We pray that, “*Your* kingdom come *Your* will be done.” That's way we're supposed to pray, not *our* will be done. (Which is what we are showing, if we are voting or attempting to exert influence in the political process.) What is God's will in a given situation? We often don't even know! We don't know God's will for the most part in many things! We know it in things we personally are to do. But we don't know anything for certain, when it comes to an election. What it is He is doing with governments and leaders? He simply hasn't told us. How important is it then to do the will of God, and not go against it? He says nobody is going to be in the kingdom of heaven, *unless* they do the will of My Father. (Matthew 7:21) What if you are doing the opposite because you are mistakenly voting the wrong way, the way that seems so right to us? And what is the right or wrong choice? Well, we don't know, do we. We believe we're in the end time because of what's happening in the world right now. That seems to be where we are in the plan of God. We believe that God's going to be much more intensely involved in the scenario from here on forward. What's the key to this?

*Look at what has happened in the past.*

There are lessons from history we can learn from. People, *voted* for Adolph Hitler! They did not believe that they were doing the wrong thing, or a bad thing. Most people *now*, with the benefit of hindsight would not vote for him! And then after voting him in, they were prepared to say, “Yes, let’s go ahead and put the power of the presidency and the chancellery of Germany together. That seems like a *good* idea...” What did he do with that. We all know *now* what Hitler did with that. What’s the lesson? People voted *for* Hitler. He came to that power legally, through the political process. It shows just how deceived they were by Hitler. They didn't know what he was going to do! That's the point. That's the exact point. *You don't know* what anyone may do!

There's a beast power that's coming. You may think you should be voting for certain people, and may actually be voting *for* the Beast, even if you don't know it's the Beast! (Revelation 13) How do you know? People *are* going to vote for him, and they're going to give him his power! What is the Beast going to do? He's going to murder the Saints! All his power and authority is going to be *given* to him by Satan and his system. Here is a

time when people will be saying, “Yes, that's a *good* idea! Just let me cast my ballot for this one,” ...who is going to turn around and *kill Christians*, and even *fight Christ* at his return!

*What should we be doing then.*

We should be doing what we're talking about. We may *think* that we know what's best. In reality, if we vote for *anyone*, it may be a vote for *our* will, against *God's* will. We are to be trying to spend the entirety of our life to learn to live by *God's* will. You don't want to throw it away. You don't want to go, with the best intentions, in a wrong direction against the Almighty! When it comes to voting, what is God doing? Is God going to preserve the country right now? Or is it time to allow it to go the direction that it would naturally would, *down!* We don't know. God knows. He knows *exactly* what he's doing. Acts 5:38-39 says, “And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God.” Even with a *single* vote, you can be found to fight against God! To go against God, to cast a vote, albeit with the best intentions, for the “wrong” person, or issue, is still going against God. Even within God's church, whole congregations split, where half of them think, “OK, I should vote for *this one*.” And the other half believe “I should vote for *that one*.” At least half the congregation is voting the wrong way, if not the whole congregation! You cannot be found to be fighting God. Why would you *want* to be doing anything even suggesting that? We're supposed to be existing in peace and harmony, and working *with* God in His ways. Since it's up to God, it's going to go the direction it is supposed to. Even if it doesn't appear so, we don't have to worry about it. If you look at democracy, actually, it is a rejecting of God. This is what happened in ancient Israel, that which Samuel said to them when they said, “*We* want a king.” Samuel of course felt bad, and God said don't feel that way. “they have rejected *Me*, that I should not reign over them.” (1Samuel 8:7)

## **WHO SHOULD A CHRISTIAN VOTE FOR?**

OUR TRUE KING! There's only One that we want to be King, and there's only one capital city that we look towards. In Hebrews 11:9-10 it says, “By faith he dwelt in the land of promise,” speaking of Abraham, “as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” That's who we are looking forward to. As we talk about many times during the Feast of Tabernacles it is the King of Kings the Lord of lords our Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior who is coming, returning in all power and glory. He is the One that is going to be the perfect ruler. The One that we represent. And is also the One that we need to continue to look forward to His coming. “*Your* kingdom come. *Your* will be done On earth as it is in heaven!”