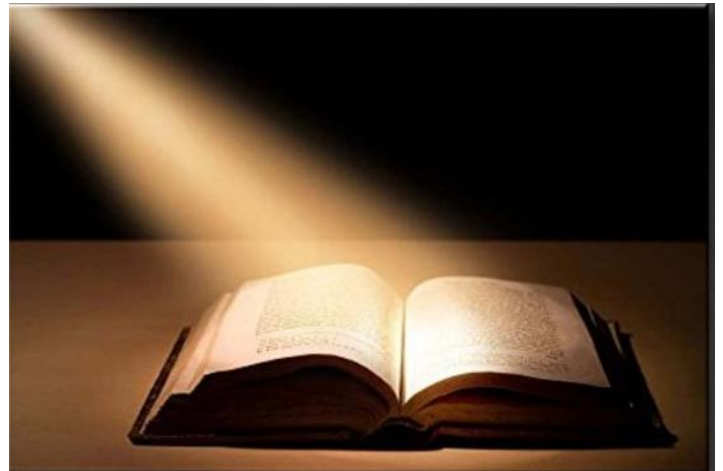




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VOTING BIBLICALLY



By Carol Rushton

The vast majority of Americans have no idea that American pastors used to give Election Day sermons. On the day of an election, congregations and anyone else in the community who wanted to would first go to local churches where pastors would preach on the importance of voting according to biblical principles. After the sermon, congregations would go to the polls to vote.

David Barton is one of the more prominent experts on American history, revealing the forgotten practice of Election Day sermons in the early days of our republic. He displays actual covers of Election Day sermons on his Wallbuilders website. Barton says:

”At the time of the Founders, it was a common practice for ministers to preach ‘Election Sermons,’ and it was very common for a clergyman to be invited to give a sermon before the newly-elected government officials. This 1790 election sermon by Rev. Daniel Foster was given before the Massachusetts Governor (John Hancock), Lieutenant-Governor (Samuel Adams), and both houses of Legislature. Rev. Foster admonished these elected

officials using Proverbs 8:16 (*By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth*), and encouraged them to govern according to God’s ways” (<https://wallbuilders.com/election-sermon/>, accessed September 6, 2020).

You can actually access and read that election sermon on the Wallbuilders website (<https://wallbuilders.com/sermon-election-1790-massachusetts/>, accessed September 6, 2020).

Very few pastors today refer to politics at all in their churches, much less instructing their congregations on biblical principles that should influence their voting. This has led to American Christians and their local communities having no knowledge about what the Bible says about civil

government, civil leaders, and important topics our country is dealing with today. They have no biblical guidelines to help them make wise decisions when voting for candidates and issues.

What does it mean to vote biblically? Why is it important? What are some of the biblical principles Christians should consider when they vote for candidates for local, state, and federal offices?

What the Bible Says About Civil Government

The Bible doesn't say anything about voting specifically because at that time in history a constitutional representative republic did not exist. However, the Bible contains statements about what constitutes righteous government and how leaders and their constituents should conduct themselves. God has given both government leaders and citizens specific responsibilities. These verses should be seriously examined and studied by all citizens of every government.

According to the Bible, countries and their leaders should acknowledge that God is the ultimate authority.

Psalm 33:12, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord . . ."

Psalm 22:28, "For the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the governor among the nations."

Psalm 21:7, "For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved."

Psalm 63:11, "But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped."

Secondly, God holds leaders to a high moral and ethical standard. Leaders must also follow their country's laws. For Israel, this meant following the Torah. In the United States, our leaders should follow our Constitution and Declaration of Independence. God will hold leaders accountable for how they govern and administer the laws of their country in a fair, honest, and equitable manner.

Proverbs 29:2, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."

Proverbs 29:4, "The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it."

Proverbs 16:12, "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness."

Proverbs 28:2, "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."

Some of the Israel's best leaders were Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Hezekiah, and Josiah. (Other verses for study: Psalm 2:10, Proverbs 29:14, Proverbs 20:26, Psalm 99:4, Proverbs 25:5, Deut. 17:14-20)

The Bible states that citizens of a country also have responsibilities. They should obey the government, its appointed leaders, and its laws. Citizens should also pray for those in authority over them.

1 Peter 2:17, "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

Romans 13:1-3 “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil . . . For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.”

I Timothy 2:1-2, “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.” (Other verses for study: Proverbs 16:13, Proverbs 24:21, Proverbs 14:35, Jeremiah 29:7)

Some pastors use the above scriptures to push the viewpoint that Christians should never disobey their government, leaders, or laws no matter what they are asked to do. However, they leave out notable exceptions that the Bible includes.

- Exodus 1 provides the account of Pharaoh ordering the Hebrew midwives, Shiphrah and Puah, to kill all the baby boys that were born to the Israelites. The midwives disobeyed and lied to Pharaoh about why they couldn’t carry out his orders. Moses’ parents, Amram and Jochebed, likewise disobeyed Pharaoh and didn’t kill their son Moses.
- Rahab hid the spies Joshua sent into Jericho, lied to the king’s men that the spies were not there, and then helped the spies escape and avoid capture. Rahab deliberately disobeyed the king of her city. Yet God honored Rahab by including her in the bloodline of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 11 includes Rahab in the Faith Hall of Fame.
- Daniel and his friends were carted away by the Babylonians and served in pagan King Nebuchadnezzar’s government. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship the king’s pagan image as a god and were thrown into a furnace. Daniel was thrown into a den of lions for praying to God.
- When the Sanhedrin arrested Peter and John for preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead and threatened them if they continued, their famous response is recorded in Acts 4:19-20, “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”
- All the apostles except John died martyrs’ deaths for refusing to deny Jesus had risen from the grave. The Roman Empire sent countless Christians to their deaths for refusing to worship the emperor. Should they have obeyed the Roman government and recanted their faith in Jesus Christ? They obviously didn’t think so, even if it meant death.

More recent examples include:

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer staunchly opposed Hitler and was arrested right before he was going to announce his engagement. Hitler ordered Bonhoeffer’s execution two weeks before American troops liberated the concentration camp where he was hanged.

- Corrie Ten Boom and her family hid Jews during World War II. They were eventually discovered by the Nazis, and all of Corrie's family members perished in concentration camps except for her.

What about Christians currently living in China, North Korea, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other countries hostile to Christianity? Christians in these countries are definitely disobeying their countries' laws by accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, reading the Bible, and witnessing to others. When caught they face prison and sometimes even torture and death. What about the Christians in the Middle East who refused to recant when captured by ISIS terrorists and were either murdered or raped or both?

You may say, "But Christians who are persecuted for refusing to renounce their faith are different. Christians in the United States are not facing persecution, so we have no reason to disobey our leaders."

Really?

- Photographer Elaine Huguenin in New Mexico refused to accept a job for a lesbian couple who wanted pictures for their same-sex "commitment" ceremony. Huguenin was sued successfully by the couple and had to pay a massive fine.
- Aaron and Melissa Klein in Oregon served everyone who patronized their bakery, Sweet Cakes by Melissa, regardless of creed, color, or religion. But when the Kleins refused to bake a wedding cake for two lesbians who were getting married because of their Christian convictions, the Kleins were sued by the couple who claimed they suffered "emotional distress" because of the Kleins' refusal to bake a cake for them. The Kleins lost every appeal and also lost their bakery.
- Jack Phillips of Masterpiece Cakeshop in Colorado was sued by a homosexual couple for also refusing to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple.

This article cannot list all the cases of florists, photographers, bakers, and wedding venues owned by Christians who have been sued and forced to pay either hefty fines or close completely because they refused to compromise their Christian beliefs and values to service same-sex or transgender wedding ceremonies and receptions.

Not only are Christians being hounded, sued and deprived of making a living in the wedding industry, Christians ministries and churches will eventually be charged and found guilty for not conducting same-sex marriages and refusing to hire homosexuals and transgenders. Christian pastors and leaders now face the very real possibility they will be fined and perhaps even imprisoned for their refusal to compromise on biblical morality.

The most recent targets of the proponents of tyrannical government are churches. Due to the Chinese coronavirus, some states are decreeing that churches must be closed while casinos and abortion clinics can remain open. John MacArthur, well-known author and pastor of Grace Community Church, is facing huge fines because MacArthur is choosing to obey God rather than the state of California.

Now do you think Christians still have religious liberty in the United States?

What the Bible Says About the Critical Issues of Our Time

When citizens of a country vote in elections, they should consider the important issues their country is facing at that time and what the Bible says about those issues. While the Bible might not directly address every issue Americans must consider when voting, we can look to the Scriptures as a guide. The topics listed below might be in a different order of importance than others would consider them but they should all be examined in voting for those who represent us locally and in Washington, D.C.



ISRAEL: “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3).

The Lord has never revoked this blessing and curse from Abraham’s descendants. It is just as much in force today as it was over 4,000 years ago when God spoke these words. It is a fact that whenever Gentiles, whether individuals, groups, or nations, bless the Jews, they are blessed and prosper in return. The opposite also holds for those who hate and persecute Jews.

Christians generally recognize that the modern State of Israel is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. After almost 2,000 years, Jews from all over the world have returned to their ancient homeland, “and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose” (Isaiah 35:1). It is amazing how God is blessing Israel now that the Jews are back in their land.

Israel is also one of the United States’ most valuable allies in the world, and especially in the Middle East. At this critical juncture in the history of the world, with anti-Semitism rising in Europe and the United States, we can ill afford God’s judgment on our country if we abandon Israel and the Jewish people.



PRO-LIFE: “I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly” (Psalm 22:10).

Murdering babies by abortion is one of the most heinous atrocities that occur in our country every day. According to Love Will End Abortion (www.lovewillendabortion.com, accessed September 6, 2020), approximately 3,000 abortions are performed every day in the United States. Abortion not only takes the life of a precious baby who will never know the promise of our forefathers to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, it also leaves the mother with devastation, anguish, and guilt that can last for years.

Incredibly, some Christians knowingly vote for politicians who promise to not only maintain the legality of murdering babies but joyfully promise to expand it. God makes it clear in not only Psalm 22 but in Psalm 139, Jeremiah 1:5, Job 31:15, and other verses that life begins at conception. Christians need to be very careful that they are voting for someone whose stance on life and abortion aligns with God’s stand, and no one else’s.

“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).

MORALITY: “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 6:9-11).

For those who believe in the divine inspiration of Scripture, the Bible is the ultimate standard for morality and ethics. Sadly, Christians don’t hear many sermons in American churches about morality anymore. It is not a popular subject. Some Christians don’t want to hear that people are sinners or that they need to constantly pray and seek God’s face for themselves and others. Many pastors tell their congregations that God loves everyone, I’m OK, you’re OK, everyone is a child of God, and everyone is going to heaven no matter what they do.

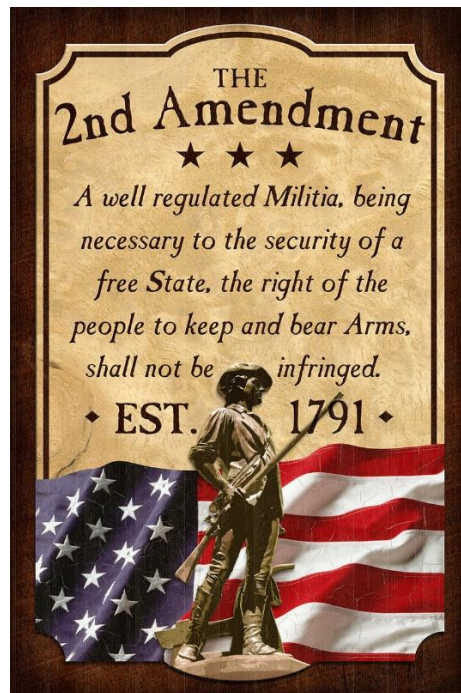
This lax attitude toward morality, not only among the general population but even among Christians, has led to a great moral degeneracy throughout our society. You expect certain scandalous behavior from actors, entertainers, and atheists but you don’t expect immorality from Christian leaders. It gives me great sorrow that more and more Christian pastors and leaders are succumbing to the sexual sins that were once reserved for the rich and famous.

Christians should investigate the backgrounds of candidates and their stand on moral issues such as homosexuality and same-sex marriage. Shockingly, American public schools are now actively pushing homosexuality, bisexuality, and other deviant sexual practices on American children, starting in pre-kindergarten and continuing through grade school. Christians need to vote for those who will take a godly stand against such practices.

[It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free constitution is pure virtue - John Adams, The Works of John Adams, Letter to Zabdiel Adams on June 21, 1776.

SECOND AMENDMENT: “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace” (Luke 11:21).

One of the most important God-given rights that Americans have is our right to self-defense. Those who fought for liberty from Great Britain understood the nature of man, that there will always be those who will want to take from others what they have not earned themselves. They also knew that there can be no liberty in any country unless private citizens are allowed to protect themselves, their family, and their property from those who would damage or destroy it.



Our framers also knew there would always be those who would want to seize power and manipulate it for their own selfish ends. For example, Fidel Castro ran for president in the 1950s on the campaign slogan, “Hope and Change.” It was only after he became president of Cuba that he demanded every Cuban turn in their guns. Cubans have had no freedom since that time.

Christians have taken for granted this precious freedom of self-defense and have not publicly supported it until recent years. If the current deterioration of the civil society in America continues, it will be even more imperative to be able to defend ourselves, our families, and our property. Christians must consider what a politician says about our right to own guns and take his or her word that they will do exactly what they promise to do if elected.

[T]o preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms, and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them - Richard Henry Lee, An Additional Number Of Letters From The Federal Farmer To The Republican, (New York: 1788), p. 170, Letter XVIII, January 25, 1788.

LAW & ORDER: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil” (Romans 13:1-3).

The current breakdown of the civil society that Americans are seeing before their very eyes is the result of lawless individuals and groups who are actively working for and promoting the violent overthrow of the United States and its Constitution. Make no mistake, whatever promises they are making now to forcibly impose on Americans a utopia of equality and justice, it will not happen if they are successful. The murders of innocent Americans and the deliberate destruction of private property and businesses have no place in a country founded on Judeo-Christian principles such as the United States.

Christians must think very carefully about the values the men and women running for office have and what kind of future they will give our children and grandchildren, nephews and nieces. Our God is not a lawless God. He is a God of justice, peace, and righteousness. If the politicians you are considering voting for do not promote these same values, you should not be voting for them.

Without liberty, law loses its nature and its name, and becomes oppression Without law, liberty also loses its nature and its name, and becomes licentiousness - James Wilson, Of the Study of the Law in the United States, 1790

Liberty or Tyranny

The Rev. Charles Finney became a Christian as an adult after he had already started a career as an attorney and then a judge in the 1800s. He decided to switch careers and become a minister and evangelist. Rev. Finney made this statement about the responsibility Christians and pastors have concerning the civil government in his sermon, “The Decay of Conscience,” on December 4, 1873.

“Brethren, our preaching will bear its legitimate fruits. If immorality prevails in the land, the fault is ours in a great degree. If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discrimination, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in religion, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it” (<https://blackrobe1776.blogspot.com/2009/11/pulpit-is-responsible.html>, accessed September 6, 2020).

For the last 240 years, Christians have thought that our liberties would always be unquestioned. Now, those liberties are under violent attack. We have forgotten that freedom is rare and tyranny is the norm in most countries around the world. Americans have not had to face the religious persecution that has been common in most of the world for centuries. Now, American Christians are looking into a terrifying future that many others have had to live with in other countries for years: the loss of jobs, home, and perhaps even being arrested and incarcerated if they do not bow down and kneel before the heartless gods of atheism, violence, and social justice.

In Israel, there is a saying that Israel must win every war; the Arabs only have to win once. This is the choice Americans now have: to live in a country where religious and civil liberties are cherished and honored or wonder if they are going to be arrested for simply going to church or not wearing a face mask.

I pray you choose wisely.



Let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle
- George Washington, *Farewell Address*, September 9, 1796.

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