



The Good News

October 18th, 2020

Volume 20, Issue 35

To Vote or Not to Vote (Presidential Edition)

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Americans are currently voting to elect a new president, new representatives, new senators, and various other officials to represent and uphold the values Americans hold dear. This presidential election cycle has been rife with controversy, uncertainty, and contention as candidates seek to gain the upper hand among voters.

For Christians, we must be aware of what is taking place around us. There is already a war underway in our nation against Christianity and against religious freedom. For the time being, this war is taking place on the battleground of society and the pushing of political correctness. However, the winds of popularity have been blowing over the plains of politics for as long as politics has existed. It may not be long before serious challenges to our religious rights begin to take form in the legal consciousness of our nation. If that ever were to happen, what would we choose? Obey the “law of the land” and stop preaching God’s Word? Or stand where the Bible stands and speak where it speaks?

Given the seriousness of these issues, we ask the question, “Should I vote? What if I don’t like any of the candidates?” In **Romans 13:1**, Paul says “*For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*” There may be those who feel that they should not vote, lest they vote contrary to the one that God desires to appoint. **Rom. 13:1** never suggests that God “appoints” the individual. Consider the definition of terms here: “appointed” means “arranged”; “authorities” simply means “power of rule”. This is supported when Paul says in **Rom. 13:2**, “*Therefore whoever resists the authority (power of rule) resists the ordinance (arrangement) of God...*” Consider our context: Paul is writing to Christians who reside at the seat of Caesar’s power in Rome and encourages them not to resist him. Did God appoint

Caesar? No, but He arranged for the power of rule to exist. If God truly appoints the specific men, then God takes away the free will (for instance) of America to vote. Does this mean that God does not “work in the kingdoms of men”? No! God stills works, and God uses those that are put (or who put themselves) in authority to further His own will. Why is this important to understand? There should never be any doubt in the minds of Christians that God is in control of all that happens and nothing escapes His attention.

Consider the following excerpt from an article written before the last presidential election as the words are just as applicable now as they were four years ago.

(published Oct. 2, 2016):

...Neither God nor civil government is forcing you to vote. If your conscience, for some reason, does not allow you to vote for any of the candidates, you should not vote (cf. Romans 14:14, 23). However, if one candidate is promoting values that has or can be implemented into law with such judicial review that contradicts godly living taught in the Bible, a Christian could vote for the other imperfect candidate who does favor truly righteous values (Proverbs 14:34).

A vote “for” a candidate is not necessarily an endorsement of one’s personal character, but can be “for” allowing tranquility for godly living. This approach to viewing our civil leaders is certainly anchored in Scripture.” – Jerry Fite

Whatever the outcome, we must remember that God has given us direction on how we are to view our leaders, and that we are to submit and pray for our leaders. In the end, God will use whoever is in power to bring about His will. Do we trust in God?