

Thinking Biblically About Political Involvement (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] hardly any TV, you've seen more political ads than you want, I know. I don't know, I don't think I've received any on my cell phone, but the house phone, the landline, every day there's some kind of political call.

Just about any place you turn on the internet, there's some type of political ad. By the time November the 3rd rolls around, you're going to be ready to scream, enough or worse.

But I want to ask you, do you really need all these ads? Do you really need all this information to help you to decide who to vote for?

I don't know many people who have not, on their own, already decided who they are going to support come November the 3rd.

What I want to ask you this morning is, how did you decide? How did you make up your mind? Did it have anything to do with your candidates' views about issues that the Bible speaks to?

[1 : 14] Does what the Bible reveals about this issue or that issue come into play as you evaluate what the different candidates running for office are saying they believe?

You know, God calls us as Christians to look to His Word for guidance about every aspect of our lives. Most all Christians understand we're supposed to look to God's Word for guidance in our homes.

What kind of husband we should be? What kind of wife you should be? Parents, children. We understand we're supposed to look to God's Word in personal relationships. Loving one another, forgiving one another, being patient, things like that.

But we need to understand that God expects us to look to Him as He has revealed His will in His Word for guidance about every aspect of our lives.

And that includes how we vote. I want us to conclude the message that I began last week on thinking biblically about political involvement.

[2 : 23] And we're going to begin with a review of some of the things we looked at last week. Let's begin with this question. Why are all people held accountable to the same biblical standards? We looked last week how every human being is accountable to God to live by the moral standards that He has revealed in His Word.

Here's a brief summary of why that's true. First, everyone has been uniquely created by God in the image of God to live in this world governed by God according to the will of God for the glory of God. And we're not going to look at all those different scriptures that we put on the screen and looked at last week. But I'm giving you the references here. That's a summary statement of how God has created us and worked in us and is still working in us.

We belong to Him as our Creator. Next, everyone possesses at least a basic understanding of God's existence. Romans chapter 1, Paul talks about that.

Everyone knows something about God by virtue of the fact that He has created this world. And we live in it. And we see that it's complex. It's orderly. And other things.

[3 : 44] God has revealed Himself through nature in a general way, the scripture says. And God has revealed His moral standards. The moral standards of God revealed in scripture.

He has put a general awareness of that basic right and wrong on people's hearts, in their conscience. Paul describes in Romans 2, 14 and 15.

Therefore, everyone will be judged by God according to the moral standards of His word on the day of judgment. That's what the Bible teaches.

Everybody at the end of their life is going to stand before God. They're going to be judged on how they lived based on the truth of God that they have received.

Here's a sobering thought. Us in this room, we're going to be held to a stricter judgment because we have the revealed word of God in scripture.

[4 : 47] If we're Christians with the spirit of God living in us to help us understand that and be able to live it out, we're not going to have a whole lot of excuses for not living faithful Christian lives when we stand before God on judgment day.

We're going to have no excuses. Some people who have a limited knowledge of who God is and just that general basic understanding of right and wrong on their conscience, they will be judged, but they didn't know as much as we do.

So we need to take this seriously, you and me in this room. Wayne Grudem explains things like this in detail in his book, *Politics According to the Bible*. And he points out how this applies to political matters that deal with moral laws.

We looked at that last week, but let me look at it again. He says, This truth, that all people are held accountable to the same biblical standards, has significant implications for how Christians understand political questions that involve right and wrong.

For example, if God says that murder is wrong, and if it is determined that the command not to murder applies to preborn children, and to those who are elderly or very ill, it clearly affects how one views laws regarding abortion and euthanasia.

[6 : 18] I didn't put this next statement on the screen last week, but Southern Baptists make that same point in our denomination's official statement of faith.

It's called the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. It was adopted, updated in the year 2000. This is also our church's statement of faith. But I want you to look at what this says in Article 15, *The Christian and the Social Order*.

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society.

Most people would say, If you're a Christian, obviously you should seek to make the will of Christ supreme in your own life. But they would stop there.

But that's not what the Bible says. I want us all to be clear about this. There is no such thing as an individual or just a personal faith belief system.

[7 : 26] God created this world and everything in it. He rules this world according to His standards. All people are accountable to God.

We as God's people who know the truth, we have been given the charge to teach this to all people, everywhere.

We are, look at it again. We are to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives for sure. That's where it begins. We can't stop there. And also in human society.

It goes on. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love.

Six weeks from this coming Tuesday, November the 3rd, Americans are going to the polls to elect a president, United States senators, some states will that is, and all the House of Representatives members.

[8 : 33] And those leaders are going to determine the laws and policies of our country, including the laws and policies that deal with matters of right and wrong found in the Bible.

You and I, as God's people, we must take our responsibility seriously. We must seek to vote for candidates who come the closest to supporting biblical morality.

And I want to emphasize come the closest because none of them are models of biblical morality.

But I want you to notice something John Frame, the theologian, says that I think can be helpful to everybody when it comes to making a decision between people, two people that you don't like, that you don't respect.

Look at this. Frame says, many political debates do not leave room for a third alternative. Typically, we have to choose between two candidates or two parties, or we have to vote yes or no on a proposition or bill.

Often, neither alternative represents an ideal Christian choice. But often, one alternative is distinctly better than the other.

[10 : 04] So that the Christian would be wise to be co-belligerent with one party or another. I think Frame is very wise in pointing this out.

Now, since some people wrongly believe that Christians should not get involved in politics at all, I want to do a quick review of why we should.

Question number two, why should Christians be involved in the political process in our country?

Well, if you look at the Bible, God has always called His people to be involved in their world.

God's always called His people to make a difference where they are, however they can. We looked last week, and I just want to touch on it now, for example, how Daniel.

Daniel was directly involved in what we would call the political system or his government. He was a governmental official in a place where he didn't want to be because he was taken captive to Babylon when he was young.

[11 : 18] But he made the best of it. He rose to the top, became a respected leader. But Daniel used his position of power, of influence, to confront the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar about the way he lived.

Look at this. Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you. Break off your sins by practicing righteousness and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, that there may perhaps be a lengthening of your prosperity.

That was a risky thing to do. But Daniel knew it was his duty to confront the king like that because there's only one standard of morality, only one standard of right and wrong in this world, that which has been revealed in Scripture.

The prophet Jeremiah told the Jewish people who were living as captives, prisoners of war in Babylon, to get involved in the affairs of their city, to benefit that pagan city, because as that city prospered, they would prosper.

Look at what he said. He said, Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on his behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

[12 : 48] And as I showed you last week, Grudem says this has to include political involvement. Look, the true welfare of such a city will be advanced through the governmental laws and policies that are consistent with God's teaching in the Bible, not by those that are contrary to the Bible's teaching.

We need to be involved in seeking to bring about the overall welfare of the United States of America, of South Carolina, of Pickens County.

And as our county and state prospers, we will prosper. That's what he's talking about. That's part of God's common grace, the way he works just in this world, not just in Christians' lives, but the way he works for good throughout this world.

You remember last week, Jesus also instructed his disciples to be actively involved in this world, and he said we're to exert our influence like salt and light. Look at this real quickly. We're to be like salt, having a preserving and flavoring effect on our community.

We're to be like light, shining the light of the truth of God's word wherever we go. It is a part of our Christian duty, our responsibility to be involved first here in Pickens County and in every level of society that we can, promoting and defending the moral standards of the Bible as the moral standards of all people because they're given to us from the God who has created all people.

[14 : 25] This is one way we fulfill also the commandment. Think about this. Love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus said that's the second most important commandment. Love your neighbor as yourself. Life works best for everyone when we try to live it according to God's way.

God's moral standards are for our benefit. They make life better for us as individuals, for our families, for our communities. And so we need to believe it, practice it, and seek to influence as many people as we can, live life God's way, according to the way he's revealed in his word.

Now, one of the ways that we need to do this right now is to look at where the political party and candidate stand on the issues and then vote for those who most clearly align with the truth of God's word.

What I want us to do now is look at this. Third question. Where do Republican and Democratic candidates stand on issues addressed in Scripture? Now, with rare exception, there are a few exceptions, but with rare exception, the men and women running for president, United States Senate, and House of Representatives, they support their political party's platform.

Therefore, let's compare the Republican and Democratic Party's platforms on the issues addressed in Scripture. If you look at those, you can look at them, go online, just type in Democratic Party platform, Republican Party platform.

[16:14] They're long documents. They cover a lot of areas. What we're going to look at now are some of the issues that could be considered, that are considered biblical issues.

The first one is abortion. Abortion destroys the life of a baby in his or her mother's womb. Every baby that is conceived is a living human being created in the image of God.

Every life that is conceived is a gift from God, and that little living human person is being shaped and molded to be the person that God wants them to be.

I want you to look at an example. The psalmist describes this in Psalm 139. He says, For you formed me in my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Jeremiah describes himself like this. Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.

[17:30] And before you were born, I consecrated you. I appointed you a prophet to the nations. Every child is conceived by the supernatural, just miraculous work of God, you might think.

It can be explained. But every conception, that's God's allowing it to happen, causing it to happen. And that child is conceived and grows and develops according to the plan and purpose of God. You are like you are because God made you like you are. But like Jeremiah talks, God makes us like we are because he has a purpose for our lives. Now, to share the slide, I'm not going to read all this, but it's here for you.

The Democratic Party platform strongly opposes any laws that would prohibit or even restrict the killing of a living human being in his or her mother's womb.

And that's what abortion is. Someone might say, well that's sort of inflammatory language. No, that's just real language. Abortion is the murder, the killing, the destruction of a human being in the mother's womb.

[18:51] That's what it is. Democrats say, a woman has the right to do that. The Republican Party platform opposes abortion and defends the unborn baby's right to life.

That's the emphasis of the Republican Party. That's the emphasis of the Bible in this case. That which is growing in the womb of a mother is a living human being.

And as a living human being created in the image of God, that person has the right to life that should be protected until natural death.

But let's move on now. Second issue, transgender issues. We're talking about biblical issues that are found in the Republican and Democratic Party platforms.

A transgender person is someone who chooses to live their life as the opposite sex or gender of how God made them. A man declares that he's going to live his life as a woman.

[20:01] Or a woman declares she's going to live her life as a man. Such people want what is their denial of reality to be protected by law.

Now I want to emphasize that. Every male who is born into this world biologically male will always be biologically male regardless of what they call themselves or how they dress or how they act.

And for a biological man or a biological woman to say I feel like the man I feel like I'm a woman trapped in a body a woman's I feel like a woman trapped in a man's body.

That's denying reality. That is a mental problem. That is not something that normal people would think. And it's certainly not something that should be protected by law.

God determines our sex or gender when he forms us in our mother's womb. God creates us male and female as you see the scripture on the screen that we've looked at numerous times God decides whether we'll be male or female.

[21:37] And that is who we are regardless of how we think or what we declare. Now the Democratic Party platform affirms people choosing their gender.

For example they want to make it legal for a biological male to identify himself as a female on government documents like say a driver's license.

If biological man chooses to be act like a woman he can go to the DMV and get a driver's license that says female. Democrats also want to allow boys who call themselves girls to use the girls bathroom at school and locker room and in other places.

They also want to allow male athletes who identify themselves as female to compete against female athletes. There's a few states that are allowing that but most states still have enough common

sense not to allow that.

Well the Republican Party platform opposes this nonsense. Opposes making this the law of the land and just pretending that your biological sex does not matter.

[23 : 07] The third issue religious liberty. This is the right to practice your religious convictions everywhere. Not just at home not just at church but at work at school and just out in the community.

This also applies to business owners being able to conduct their businesses according to biblical convictions. For an example colleges like Anderson and North Greenville Universities here in South Carolina they're Baptist institutions they now have the right based on their statements of faith to say we're not going to hire somebody who is a homosexual in administration or to teach.

They now have the right because of their statement of faith to say we're not going to allow students to openly engage in homosexual behavior on our campus and they do those things because the Bible clearly teaches that homosexual behavior is sinful behavior.

I'll give you one example from 1 Corinthians 6 Paul is writing to these people do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor revilers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Homosexual behavior is not singled out here as some kind of unique sinful behavior. Paul is just saying that anybody who chooses to live a sinful lifestyle like this including practicing homosexuality will be excluded from the kingdom of God.

[24 : 48] It is contrary to the way God made us and the way that God regenerates a person when he saves a person. It is contrary to living a Christian life.

Now there is good news in the next verse. Paul goes on to say to point out that all sinners can be changed by God's grace. All sin can be forgiven. Look at this. And such were some of you.

But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. There were people in that church who had been alcoholics.

People in that church who had committed adultery. There were people in that church who had been involved in a homosexual lifestyle, but they repented of their sin.

They changed. They were not living that way anymore. Another example. This has been upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. Currently, a Christian baker does not have to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple that wants decorations depicting two men or two women being married because that would violate the Christian baker's convictions that marriage is between a man and a woman only.

[26 : 11] As the scripture says, look at this, the foundational statement about marriage in the scripture, Genesis 2, 24, therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife and they shall become one flesh.

Now, I want you to show the slides. There's going to actually be two. Make note of these. The democratic platform forbids such religious liberty.

The democratic party platform considers running your business or your school or institution or even personal life according to your religious convictions to be discrimination.

For Anderson University to say, we're not going to employ a homosexual to teach here. The democratic party says, we're going to outlaw that.

We're going to ban it because that's discriminatory. The Republican party is saying, no, that's what the Bible teaches. That's what your religion teaches and you have a right to practice your religion even as an institution, Anderson University.

[27 : 25] The Republican party supports religious liberty. It affirms the rights of businesses, institutions, and individuals to practice their beliefs in life, work, school, as well as home and church.

This applies not just to Christians, I want you to understand all of this, this applies to people who practice any religion. You can live out your faith in this country without being discriminated against. Now the fourth issue is traditional marriage and family. So I'm going to go straight to this slide and be real quick with this. Look at this if you would.

The Republican party states this. I'm going to look at it here. Supports traditional marriage and family based on one woman and one man.

Every child, here's the quote, every child deserves a married mom and dad and our laws and government regulations should actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous society.

[28 : 38] That statement is a statement of fact. All the research shows in every demographic, in every demographic, in every racial group, a home where there is a stable presence of father and mother strongly impacts a child's well being throughout their lives.

People will talk about the problems of poverty today. One of the greatest ways to deal with poverty is for our government to have policies that actually promote and reward a man and a woman living together as husband and wife staying together and bringing up their children in a solid home.

A lot of the racial problems in our country today could be eliminated by focusing on both husband and wife, father and mother, being there, being present, being involved in the lives of their children. Well, the Democratic Party, as you see on the screen, Democratic Party has sections supporting every group you can imagine under the sun except the family.

Look at it. Go online and look it up and you will not find a statement supporting what we would call traditional families, a husband and wife, a father and mother, being in the home, raising their children.

[30 : 15] If you doubt me, what I'm talking about, ask any teacher in this room where the problems are in their classrooms.

Children can't help it. But the ones that suffer most are being raised alone by someone and a lot of times neither father or mother.

You know, there are other biblical issues addressed in the Republican, Democrat, platforms like the role of government in our lives. That's another way of talking about socialism and we did, we've done that enough over the last few weeks.

But let me just say this. Democrats look more favorably at socialism and giving the government more power in our lives and throughout our country.

Republicans are opposed to socialism and want to limit the power of government government to control our lives and control everything in our country. Now, in light of all we've looked at last week and this week, it's clear that God does call his people to be involved in the world.

[31 : 29] We can't pretend that what's going on is not going on. And that includes being involved in political matters. matters. I think John Frame says it best in his explanation of why he's involved in political matters.

Look at this. He says, I try to base all my ideas not only about theology but about everything else on the scriptures. That includes politics. If I am to do all things for the glory of God, that surely includes my voting behavior and my other efforts to improve the government of my country.

I want to ask you, are you involved in the political process of this country to the glory of God? Are you informed of what the Bible teaches about the issues of today?

The Bible doesn't address every issue that's being discussed today. But the Bible does strongly state clearly a position on the issues we've looked at and many more.

Do you look to the Bible for guidance about what is right, what is wrong? Are you informed about what the candidates running for office believes about these issues?

[32 : 49] How they line up with the truth of God's word? And are you planning to vote according to the truth of God's word? For the good of our country and for the ultimate purpose of glorifying God.

Now I want to make one thing real clear. This is not some kind of campaign speech or rally for any candidate.

I want to make this clear. I don't think either Republican Donald Trump nor Democrat Joe Biden has the moral character to be president of the United States. You know a lot of times evangelicals get blasted by the liberals in this country because many evangelicals support Donald Trump.

They talk about his lifestyle and so forth. Most all evangelicals that I've ever heard or read speak about this all denounce Donald Trump's moral character and lifestyle.

And I do too. I do not hold him up in any shape, form, or fashion as a model of integrity. As an example of someone I would want my grandchildren now to grow up to be like.

[34 : 10] But neither would I Joe Biden. Or four years ago neither would I Hillary Clinton. But the fact is this.

One of these men, Donald Trump or Joe Biden, is going to be elected president of the United States in November. It doesn't matter what you think about either one of them.

Therefore as Christians, we need to vote for the one whose policies and party platform most closely support biblical principles.

That also applies to choosing our senator from South Carolina that we're going to do this year. Either Republican Lindsey Graham or Democrat Jamie Harrison.

Final thought. Voting matters. It's important for us to be involved in political process. But we must guard against putting too much confidence in any human being or any human institution.

[35 : 30] Our unreserved confidence must always stay upon our sovereign God. He alone controls this world.

Our country. And our individual lives. Regardless of the outcome of an election. I think the scripture is very clear about certain issues that will help us to evaluate the two parties, the two platforms, the two candidates.

I think the Bible is very clear how we should vote. It matters that we vote. The outcome of this election matters.

But no matter what, once this election is over, God is still in control. He is still working in this world for His glory and our ultimate good.

And He will do that no matter who is in the White House. No matter who controls the Senate or the House. We must never lose sight of the fact that God is sovereign.

[36 : 54] God will be the one who determines the outcome of this election. Read Romans 13 if you have any doubt. So trust Him. But be involved.

Recognize that God works through His people to bring about His outcomes. Let's pray together.

Father, help us to think biblically and deeply about about these issues. Help us to be involved in the political process.

Not just voting, but right now, voting November the 3rd. And help us, Father, to be guided by the truth of Your Word and what the candidates and their parties say in relation to the truth of Your Word.

And we pray, Father, that You will bless our country through this process, through the outcome of this election.

[38 : 09] But help us, Father, no matter what, to keep our true faith and confidence in You and You alone.

Let's just in an attitude of prayer listen to the Lord and respond to Him during these next few minutes. When I say this to God, we pray for the darkness of what is this morning.

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