

Biblical Priorities for Public Servants
Selected Scriptures

Introduction

There was a time in the last millennium when Pastors could easily avoid politics for the most part. The political parties proposed different solutions to problems, but their party platforms were not far apart on basic questions of morality even if a particular candidate had personal moral failures. As time went on, critical moral issues such as abortion entered into the political arena which could not be ignored by pastors. The Moral Majority of the 1980's was one response to the increasing intrusion of politics into moral issues that had been the domain of churches and other religious groups. It has become much, much worse since then.

Since the beginning of this millennium, political pressure has resulted in gross immorality being forced upon our nation with those of depraved minds proclaiming their debauchery to be good and demanding that it be celebrated, not just tolerated. We now live in a society in which if you hold to even basic moral positions such as men and women are distinct sexes defined by God and expressed in the biology of every cell in your body, you are considered to be a bigot. The majority of lawyers on the U.S. Supreme Court may no longer recognize basic biology, but that does not change biologic reality. If you further hold that marriage is to be between one man and one woman as defined by Jesus in Matthew 19, you are declared to be homophobic and your business is subject to boycotts and law suits. Passing laws to make something legal does not change God's declaration of it to be an abomination before Him. And in the present time, if you believe that God created all men of equal value because all humans are made in His image so that "all lives matter," sinners and saints alike since Jesus came to redeem sinners and make them part of His one body, the church, which is made up of every tribe, nation and tongue, then in a complete reversal of logic and reality, you are called a racist and subject to intimidation, threat, destruction of your property and even violence to your person. Treating people differently based on the melanin count in their skin is racism no matter whether it is the greater or lesser count that is favored.

I would very much like to avoid politics just from the standpoint that it becomes divisive, but my responsibility before God is to proclaim His revelation on all subjects which makes that impossible. I must declare what is right and wrong before God according to His word. I can do no less and remain faithful to Him. You can do not less than pursue knowledge and understanding of what God has revealed and heed it if you claim to be a Christian, or for that matter, to even be God fearing. The issue for every Christian is to know the Lord and follow Him.

Christians and Politics in a Democracy

The Scriptures record God's tolerance for many different types of government, and the future millennial reign of Jesus Christ will be a benevolent dictatorship. Because God is all knowing and all wise as well as both good and just, Jesus will be the perfect dictator, and because the saints who will reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12), His bureaucracy will also be perfect. We can look forward to that day, but that day has not come yet, and for the present time we have to deal with our present government.

Contrary to popular believe, we live in a constitutional republic, not a democracy. The difference is that in a democracy, decisions are made by all the citizens voting on all the issues. In our form of government, the citizens select their representatives and petition them on the issues, and everyone is obligated to follow the law as set in the Constitution. This form of government does not remove God's sovereign choice in who the government officials will be, but it does place the responsibility on the people. If the government officials are good, the people will reap the blessings that come with wise choices. If the government officials are corrupt and evil, the people will bear the consequences that come upon them because of those they have elected to office. Proverbs 29:2 states this succinctly, "*When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people groan.*"

This means that the Christian citizen must be serious about voting and then vote for the candidate that would best fulfill God's purposes for government. We will look at this more in depth in a moment, but in brief, government is to promote good and repress evil. As a Christian citizen you have the responsibility to strive to see God's standards upheld which means applying Biblical principles when choosing a candidate and addressing the issues of the day. We seek to have the best candidate elected to

office - perhaps even yourself.

Let me quickly add this warning in saying this. Do not to fall into the trap of substituting the quest for a godly human government as a quest for the kingdom of God. There are theologies that teach that man will bring about God's kingdom on earth through establishment of proper human government. That is simply not true. Even a cursory examination of the book of Revelation or consideration of Jesus' words in Matthew 24 tell us things will get a lot worse before the Lord returns to establish His kingdom.

Our goal as Christian citizens of a constitutional republic is to see representatives elected who will be able to fulfill God's purposes for government even as we wait for Christ's return to set up a perfect one. You are to vote for the candidates that most closely matches God's declared moral will on the issues and have enough integrity to fight for the positions taken in their campaigns. It is harmful to vote for a liar who promises all the right things but doesn't do them. With that in mind, never vote for someone just because you like the way they look, the way they speak, or because you belong to the same political party. Vote for someone because they reflect what God demands of public servants. And when God's moral laws are transgressed and His purposes for government are not fulfilled, it is not only right, but necessary to be in opposition and especially so in our form of government.

Now to any of this, you must first know what God has revealed about Himself and His will. What are His commands, principles and precepts? What has He declared about good and evil, right and wrong, moral and immoral? What does He demand of those that He places in positions of government authority? He will hold them accountable to fulfill those commands, and in a society such as ours which elects those leaders, He will also hold us accountable, either blessing us or cursing us, according to our own choices as a society.

Second, you must know the issues of the day and the character of the candidates in order to evaluate them properly. That can be very difficult because so many politicians are adept liars. They are skilled at deceiving others about their true intentions by telling people what they want to hear without revealing what they believe or will do. Related to this I also need to issue a strong warning about the sources from which you get your information. I was a journalism major in High School (1974-1976). I was taught the difference between news stories, news features and commentary. A good news story gives you the facts while striving to remove as much bias as possible in the reporting. Commentary or Opinion is exactly that with the story told to sway the audience to the position of the commentator. A news feature is written to catch the interest of the reader / viewer and personal bias is included in the reporting. This is most often recognized by the descriptive words used - and why it was significant that AP changed its style guide to ban the use of the word "riot" and replace it with "upset." Nearly all news reporting is now news features. The main stream media - ABC, CBS, NBC, New York Times, L.A. Times, Washington Post, etc. and the tech media news such as Apple, Google, Facebook, etc. all being left. News organizations such as MSNBC and CNN, etc. are even farther left. The Wall Street Journal is center and Fox is at center-right. Note carefully as well that the big tech companies - Google, Facebook, Twitter, etc. are censoring or putting disclaimers on news stories that do not fit their agenda while promoting stories that do. I will add that a lot of the media "fact checking" sources are also leftist and are not true to the facts. These are the reasons why stories that criticize the politically correct positions get very little media traction and those that match those positions are promoted as top news stories. These are the reasons why you hear a constant drumbeat of reporting about positive testing for the virus SARV-CoV-2 as if it was the disease resulting from it, COVID-19. You do not hear stories about Government restrictions resulting in the death and harm of a lot more people than COVID-19, which was around the 24th leading cause of death in England a couple of weeks ago. When people are fed a steady diet of lies and propaganda, don't be surprised that they believe them. Christians are to pursue truth in every area of life because truth reflects our God and lies reflect our enemy, the devil, who is the father of lies (John 8:44).

What does God require of government? What has God said about moral components of the major issues of our day? What are the character qualities that make for a good government leader? I will begin with an overview of the basic responsibilities of government and then look at some of the key issues of our time.

Basic Responsibilities of Government - Romans 13:1-5

Romans 13:1-5 gives a succinct description of what God requires from government.¹ *Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those*

which exist are established by God. ² Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. ³ For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; ⁴ for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. ⁵ Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

I addressed this passage back in May in my sermon about the lines of authority and submission in the Bible, so I will not be doing that again here other than to say that we submit to God first in everything, so our submission to governing authorities is restricted to its laws and regulations that are in keeping with God's commands. The governing authority in this nation is supposed to be the Constitution and the laws which are in accord with it. We are not to submit to government decrees that are contrary to the Constitution or actual law since in doing so we actually join them in disobeying the proper authority in our system of government. However, the threat of fines, lawsuits and jail usually gains compliance even if the edicts are illegal.

Romans 13:1-5 states two primary principles that must be noted and highlighted. First, government officials are ministers of God. They may be reprobate and godless individuals themselves, but they are nevertheless ministers - δῖάκονας / diakonos - servants of God, and God will hold them accountable. Daniel 4 records that Nebuchadnezzar found this out the hard way, but he did find out and eventually acknowledged God's sovereignty over men. Tragically, many ungodly government officials will not figure it out until they stand before God in judgment when it is too late to repent. One of the ways in which we ought to pray for our governmental officials is for the repentance and salvation of those that do know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Even the most reprobate government official is not our enemy. Our enemy is Satan and his demons. Sinful people are the mission field. They need to be saved.

Second, government officials are placed by God for the good of the people. That is stated from both the positive and negative positions. Roman rule could be oppressive and cruel, yet for the most part, Roman rule brought good to the people by establishing stability and security. Pax Romana - the peace of Rome - enabled trade and travel to be established throughout the empire enabling civilization to advance.

On the positive side, government is to give praise to those that do good. The idea of this is to speak of the excellence of a person, to declare approval. This is seen in the honors and awards governments will give out to citizens that have done good deeds worthy of special recognition. These would include things such as a parade for a hero, a "key to the city," a certificate of merit or a medal of honor.

On the negative side, government is to be a cause of fear to those that do evil. That is why government is given the power of the sword which represents the authority of the ruler to punish evil doers even to the extreme of the death penalty. Good government is an avenger who brings wrath on those who practice evil.

Governments that do the opposite of either of these two functions are in direct violation of its God given purpose and are in danger of God's judgment against them - both the individual and the government itself if it tolerates such wicked people. The prophet Isaiah warned ancient Judah about this saying, "*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*" (Isaiah 5:20). If God will judge His chosen people for this failure, then all other nations should heed the serious warning of their example.

We have seen this twisting of good and evil happening with increasing frequency in our own land and especially in the last five months as many large city mayors and some governors have given aid and comfort to rioters while seeking to prosecute those who try to defend themselves or others. Causing fear to those who do good or giving comfort to those that do evil removes the legitimacy from that government and subjects it to God's removal which can come from many different means and methods as demonstrated by history.

How does God deal with rulers and governments that make themselves illegitimate? The Lord may chastize or replace them as He has done many times throughout history. Chastening may come through natural disasters or oppression by other nations such as happened to Egypt (Exodus 7-11) or to Israel during the period of the Judges and Kings. He can replace a government by striking down the ruler supernaturally or with a disease (such as Herod in Acts 12:21-24). He may have it overthrown by an internal rebellion (1 Kings 12, 22, etc.) or by having another nation conquer it (2 Kings 17, 25).

Anyone that is running for an office that cannot distinguish good from evil, what is moral from what

is immoral, is not an individual that is fit for that office. Such individuals are a curse on the people they are supposed to serve as stated in Proverbs 29:2, *“When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people growl.”* Such wicked government officials also bring God’s curse on themselves for He will judge them.

We are next going to consider some of the priority issues in which there is a clear contrast between good and evil. This is the simplest way to evaluate any candidate. I am listing them in my order of priority. Your order may differ slightly, but I think that any Christian who is a student of God’s word will come up with a similar list. Other issues may also be important, but they are of a much lower priority. Direct moral issues are much more critical than a particular economic system and policies.

1) Life: The first moral priority is human life. God is the creator of life and all human life is made in His image, so all human life has inherent worth (Genesis 1:26-27), which is why God prohibited murder of human life and required capital punishment for those that do (Genesis 9:6). Other punishments were given for those that accidentally killed a human (Numbers 35). The innocent blood of those murdered cried out for justice and that was one reason for the destruction of Judah (2 Kings 24:2). The Bible is also clear that human life begins in the womb. God formed you in your mother’s womb (Psalm 139:13). God said He knew and consecrated Jeremiah while he was in his mother’s womb (Jeremiah 1:5-6). John the Baptist recognized the presence of Jesus and leaped for joy while both were still in their mothers’ wombs (Luke 1:41-44). To kill a baby in the womb is to destroy the work of God and attack His image. Abortion is murder of a human being just as is infanticide and euthanasia. Yet, there are candidates that advocate all those things as acceptable. There are now politicians advocating infanticide. While some states have enacted laws to place reasonable restrictions on abortion including right to know laws, parental notification and medical safety regulations, other states, such as our own (NY) have removed those so that abortion is legal without restriction until birth and no longer has to be performed by a doctor or in a medical facility that meets the requirements of any other surgical center. Euthanasia is now legal in nine states and the District of Columbia, and as predicted, the protections against a person being pressured into euthanasia are crumbling or already worthless.

Questions to consider concerning life: What value does the candidate put on human life? What protections does the candidate advocate to protect human life? Is the candidate pro-life, indifferent or pro-abortion? Those who call themselves “pro-choice” are either indifferent or pro-abortion and are usually liars since they rarely support informed consent, waiting period laws or medical safety regulations. Those that will not protect the life of the most innocent and helpless among us, a baby in the womb, cannot be trusted to protect anything else except their own interests. What is the candidate’s positions on euthanasia? What are their views on the proper punishment for those convicted of first degree murder? Are they favorable to God’s command for capital punishment (Genesis 9:6), or do they consider the value of the life of the one murdered equal to a few years in prison?

Just so that you are aware, there is a false political front group trying to make the case that issues such as government supplied health care, food and shelter are life issues since people could die without these services. Sorry, charitable actions to prolong life are not a pro-life equivalent to removing legal protection for premeditated murder. It is ludicrous for someone to say they are a pro-life abortion advocate. Anyone who is pro-abortion is not pro-life regardless of claims otherwise or other charitable giving. Our governor’s claim to care about human life is a absurd as can be given his expansion of abortion and putting COVID-19 positive patients into nursing homes.

Without naming the two dominate political parties, in the matter of life, the party platform of one is unquestionably pro-abortion and actively seeks to repeal the few restrictions that have been put in place. The other is strongly pro-life. If you don’t know which is which, you need to find out or recuse yourself from voting for being too ignorant. Voting pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia is diametrically opposed to following Christ.

2) Protection: Protection encompasses both internal and external threats. A police force and local militia protect against local threats while armed forces protect against threats from other nations. While armed forces can be used by evil men for evil purposes, that very fact proves the necessity of having armed forces to protect against those who would do us evil. The founding fathers of the United States understood this and that is why the U.S. Constitution enumerated the need of an army, navy and militia to suppress insurrections and repel invasions (Article 1, Section 8) and the role of the President as the Commander in Chief (Article 2, Section 2).

Questions to consider about protection: Does the candidate understand the protective role of government both locally and nationally and advocate law and order? Police should be supported in their protective role while being restricted from becoming oppressors themselves. Does the candidate understand the necessity and proper use of armed forces as well as diplomacy in averting war (Proverbs 20:18; Luke 14:31)? While it is important to try to avoid war, when it must come, there must be the ability to wage it effectively with clear purpose and objectives.

This has become a much more important issue in this election because of the number of politicians that are either calling for or yielding to the pressure to defund police departments and / or saddle the police with requirements that prevent them from doing their job to uphold law, order and public safety. It is unconscionable to order police to stand down - not intervene - when rioters are causing mayhem, destroying property and causing bodily harm to others. If you do not know where the candidates stand on these issues, you better find out or you may find your government supporting the anarchists as they destroy your community and threaten your life.

3) Justice: Government has the responsibility to establish and execute justice, and to the degree a government deviates from God's standards of justice is the degree to which it is failing. Tragically, the United States is failing in many ways to carry out justice due to political corruption by which laws are ignored or changed to benefit the politically favored classes. We also have judges that rule based on what they would like it to be rather than what the law actually states. This is true all the way up to and including SCOTUS which has issued many opinions that are contrary to our U.S. Constitution.

Let me quickly point out that so called "social justice" is not Biblical justice because it is an effort to bring about an equality of outcome instead of treating all people with equity. God has not gifted all people equally so equality of outcome is impossible without forcibly taking from some to give to others. The word for that is stealing. True social justice is an equality of opportunity or fairness in the application of the law and not equality of outcome. Scripture is clear that favoritism is not to be given to either the rich or the poor (Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17).

Let me add to this idea of justice the injustice of critical race theory and the blatant racism it promotes. Promoting one group over another group due to the amount of melanin in the skin is prejudice and racism no matter which group is favored. Claiming any group to be the "oppressor" class due to either skin hue (all "whites") or advocacy of virtues such as a strong work ethic, education, not having children until after you are married, deferred pleasure, saving (minorities that are successful in American society) is rank marxism and a quest to become the new oppressor class.

Justice must also be carried out with the right attitude. Micah 6:8 succinctly states, *"He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness (or mercy), And to walk humbly with your God?"* This statement encompasses what you do, what you desire, and what you are. It is humility in walking with God that brings about the proper kindness and mercy that temper justice. We are to be merciful because we have received mercy from God (Matthew 5:7; 18:21-35). However, mercy without justice is injustice and an abandonment of the protective role of government.

Questions to consider concerning justice: Does the candidate uphold the rule of law? Does he advocate interpretation of law according to what is written and original intent? Is his advocacy or opposition to a law based on Biblical standards or something else? Is the candidate fair in his dealings with both supporters and opponents? Is the candidate subject to political corruption by influences either in or outside of government? Does the candidate treat all people equitably or show either favoritism or hostility toward any particular ethnic or socio-economic groups? If you don't know the positions of the candidates, you had better find out before you find yourself suffering because of their injustice.

4) Morality: I already pointed out that Isaiah 5:20 pronounces a woe upon those *"who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness."* Tragically, there are many in our society that do just that. God clearly describes what is good and what is evil in the Bible, but He also pronounces some things as abhorrent and abominations. There are some things that are especially evil which should receive a priority in a government's protective efforts and application of justice. Some of these things reveal an evil character even when the outward presentation looks good. The Old Testament word for abomination (toebah) is usually used in reference to idolatry and improper worship of God, however, there are also societal actions that are also described as abominations.

Leviticus 18 lists immoral sexual practices including homosexuality, incest, fornication, adultery and

bestiality alongside child sacrifice as abominations which defiled the land. The penalty for most of them was death. Abortions are this nation's child sacrifices to feminism. Many political leaders advocate sexual immorality and perversions demanding not just tolerance, but preferred status and celebration of homosexuality and those living in the confused world of transgender dysphoria. The family should be the first social unit of protection, but incest turns it into the first opportunity to prey on the weaker. Adultery destroys the trust that is foundational for marriage and thus destroys families, and both it and fornication spread a host of diseases that can hinder or destroy health and leave women infertile. Bestiality and homosexual practices introduce and spread even more diseases some of which kill. The *Sexuality and Gender* report by Dr. Lawrence S. Mayer and Dr. Paul R. McHough, professors of Psychiatry at John Hopkins University, shows that catering to the desires of gender confused individuals and pushing them into the transgender agenda harms them psychologically and physically. Simple compassion should compel us to strive to stop these practices for the protection of society and the individuals doing them, yet many candidates pride themselves in advocating acceptance and celebration of these abominations with some enacting or striving to enact laws to prohibit counselors from helping them to overcome their sexual confusion. For them, you can choose to be perverted and will be affirmed along the way, but once you have started down that road, you will not be allowed to change your mind.

Questions to consider concerning sexual morality. Does the candidate seek to protect marriage or make it easier to get a divorce (which usually exploits the woman with children)? Do they uphold the sacredness of marriage between a man and a woman or agree with the homosexual perversion of it? Do they advocate laws against sexual perversion, or do they advocate the LGBT-XYZ agenda forcing society to accept the sexually perverse as a specially protected class? Perhaps we have already passed the tipping point in the descent into the debauchery of Sodom and Gomorrah, but it is still worth fighting against these abominations and for Biblical morality.

Personal Integrity. Proverbs 6:16-19 is helpful in understanding God's assessment of people and therefore in evaluating a political candidate's personal integrity. *"¹⁶ There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, ¹⁹ A false witness [who] utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers."*

Haughty eyes refer to that condescending look the proud can give because they think themselves to be superior to the rest of us mere knaves. This is a common attitude among the political elite. Beware of proud and arrogant candidates that think they know what is best for you and want government control over your life. Is the candidate proud or humble?

A lying tongue reveals a dishonest and selfish character striving to do what is best for themselves. It seems many politicians strive to make lying an art form, but a person that is characterized by lying cannot be trusted on anything. The Bible gives strong warning against it including that those who practice it will be cast into the lake of fire instead of going to heaven (Leviticus 19:11; Proverbs 12:22; Colossians 3:9; Revelation 21:8). All candidates will fail at some point, but more is revealed about their integrity by whether they are honest about it or not than in the particular failure itself. Is the candidate characterized by honesty or lying? If the choice is between two liars, consider that exaggeration and hyperbole are not the same as continued bald face lying about things he has already been corrected on many times. Being "loose with the truth" is bad, but showing disdain for it is much worse.

Accomplices are as guilty as the individual that actually sheds innocent blood. This includes those who allowed it to happen because they either advocated the laws permitting it or were complacent in their duties to prevent it. What is the candidate's position on abortion, infanticide and euthanasia as well as their positions on law enforcement, military and justice?

A heart that devises wicked plans will be revealed by what the candidate advocates. Does the candidate's vision for the future and goals for the present line up better with what God would want or Satan? Do they promote what is moral and godly and strive to restrict what is evil, or do they call good evil and evil good?

Feet that run rapidly to evil describes the feeding frenzy of sharks that strive to get whatever they can when someone has fallen victim to another. They may join in the evil themselves or just watch it with glee. They see another person's downfall as an opportunity for gain for themselves. They broadcast the shame of another instead of trying to correct and heal it. What is the candidate's response to the evil that

befalls others? Sorrow? Intervention? Or joy? Joining in?

A false witness is worse than the general liar because his lies make someone else his victim. It is bad enough to lie about yourself to get others to think you are something you are not or can do something you can't, but it is a lot worse to try to destroy another person with lies. That includes spreading gossip or having others do that in his stead. This has become common political practice. Does the candidate lie about others? Verify content of political attack ads.

The final abomination in this list is spreading strife among brothers. Relationships that should be close and harmonious, or at least cooperative, are strained or even destroyed by the actions of an antagonist. They can generate the strife themselves or just take advantage of a rift or strain already present and make it wider through lies, gossip, rumor and innuendo. This is often a root cause of dysfunctional governments. Is the candidate known for antagonism or graciousness?

When these various abominations are combined, we have the politics of personal destruction. An evil, but effective tactic, used by wicked people to gain political power for themselves or their candidate.

Let me quickly add that having solid convictions and firm positions does not require you to be obstinate. The truth should be spoken in love. Even strong rebukes can be given with a sense of caring. A position can be stated firmly without joining in the rants and rage of the opposition. Is the candidate able to hold firmly to his convictions and still be gracious and have a spirit of cooperation?

Conclusions

There are many other Biblical issues that could also be addressed and should be applied to politics - graft and corruption come to mind - but this sermon is meant only to prod your thinking to consider the most important Biblical values and priorities when voting, running for public office or serving in one. I have already gone much longer than normal simply because I believe this next election could be a tipping point from which there will not be a recovery. I am not a member of either of the major political parties because I find both of them too often contrary to my values. However, one party has become contrary to nearly every thing I have said today while the other at least matches a majority of it. If you can't figure out which one is which, then you are either politically ignorant or have been watching too much mainstream news to know any resemblance to truth. Either recuse yourself from voting because you do not know enough to vote wisely, or do your homework quickly so that you can vote with intelligence.

You will not find a candidate that agrees with you 100% on every issue, and every candidate is human so there will be some flaws, but you are to evaluate carefully and make the best vote you can. If the candidates are so bad that you cannot vote for any of them, then keep your conscience clear and write in the name of someone you respect.

As a Christian, your first priority is always to please our Lord and trust Him to bring good out of any situation even when they are not to your liking and are antagonistic to His stated moral will (Romans 8:28; James 1:2-4). While you want your candidate to win and may work hard to achieve that, your primary goal is to please the Lord, not to be on the winning side. If running for office, your primary goal is to please the Lord, not to win the election. If in public office, your primary goal is to please the Lord, not to win re-election or please the people. The goal of every Christian should be to one day stand before our Lord and hear Him say, "*Well done thou good and faithful servant.*"

Sermon Notes - 10/18/2020

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Introduction

Politics has been increasing its intrusion on _____ issues to which the church must respond

Christians and Politics in a Democracy

Constitutional _____ - citizens are responsible for government via representatives

Man will not bring about God's kingdom on earth - _____ will come to set up His kingdom

We strive to elect _____ that will best be able to fulfill God's purposes for government

You must know what God has _____ in order to vote according to His will

You must know the issues of the day and the character of the candidate in order to properly _____ them

Most of the news media purposely reports stories according to their own _____

Basic Responsibilities of Government - Romans 13:1-5

Submission is to God _____, then governmental authority, which in this nation is the Constitution & law

Government officials are _____ (διάκονας / diakonos) of God - Even the reprobates

Government officials are put in place by God for the _____ of the people

Government is to give praise to those who do _____

Government is to cause _____ to those who do evil - they carry the sword as an avenger of God's wrath

Governments that do the opposite (Isaiah 5:20) are in _____ of chastening or replacement

Anyone running for office that cannot properly distinguish between good and evil is not _____ for office

Evaluating the Candidates

1) Life is the first moral _____ (Genesis 1:26,27; 9:6; Numbers 35, 2 Kings 24:2)

Life begins in the _____ (Ps 139:13; Jer 1:5-6; Lk 1:41-44), Abortion, infanticide & euthanasia are all murder

Questions: What value does the candidate put on human life? Are they pro-life, indifferent or pro-abortion? What is their position on euthanasia? Do they uphold capital punishment for murder?

It is ludicrous for someone to claim to be both pro-life and _____

2) Protection of its people against internal and external threats is a primary _____ of government

Questions: Does the candidate understand the protective role of government both locally and nationally?

Does he understand the necessity and proper use of armed _____ as well as diplomacy

It is unconscionable to order police to stand down when _____ are causing mayhem, destruction & injury

3) Justice: To the degree a government deviates from God's standard of justice, it is _____

True social justice is not equal _____, it is equality of opportunity or fairness in the application of law

Micah 6:8 - Justice is to be tempered by mercy. Mercy without _____ is injustice.

Questions: Does the candidate uphold the rule of law? Is he fair in his dealings with supporters and opponents? Is the candidate subject to political corruption either in or outside of government? Does the candidate treat all people equitably?

4) **Morality** - Isaiah 5:20 - woe to those who call evil good, and good evil

Some things are especially evil and God pronounces them as abhorrent and _____

Leviticus 18 - _____ sexual practices and perversions and child sacrifice

Sexual perversions _____ families and spread diseases, some of which are deadly

Questions: Does the candidate seek to protect marriage or make it easier to get a divorce? Do they uphold the sacredness of marriage between a man or a woman or advocate redefining marriage and the family? Do they uphold laws against sexual perversions or do they advocate forcing to accept them.

5) **Personal integrity**: Proverbs 6:16-19. Seven things that are abominations to the Lord.

Haughty eyes - The condescending look of the _____ & arrogant. Is the candidate proud or humble?

A lying tongue - Liars cannot be _____. Is the candidate characterized by honesty or lying?

Shed innocent blood - Accomplices advocate laws allowing it or are complacent in preventing it.

What is the candidate's position on abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, law enforcement, justice?

A heart that devises wicked plans - Do the candidate's policies reflect the standards of God or _____?

Feet that run rapidly to evil - What is their response to evil? Sorrow? Intervention? Watch? Join in?

A false witness - done to _____ the other person. Does the candidate lie / slander others?

Spread strife among brothers - either generate it or perpetuate it by lies, slander and innuendo

Is the candidate known for antagonism or graciousness & cooperation while still firm in convictions?

Conclusions - Strive to approach politics according to _____ values and priorities instead of political ones

Our first priority is always to be _____ to our Lord & trust Him whether voting, running or serving

The goal of every Christian is to hear our Lord say to us, "*Well done thou good and faithful servant.*"

KIDS CORNER

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Count how many times the word "candidate" is said. 2) Discuss with your parents how to apply Biblical principles when voting.

THINK ABOUT IT. Questions to consider in contemplating the sermon or discussing it with others. How have you seen politics intrude into issues to which the church must respond? What kinds governmental systems can you find in the Bible? What is the difference between a democracy and a constitutional republic? What are the responsibilities of citizens in each? What should the Christian's goal be in electing a representative? How do we know that man will not bring about God's kingdom on earth? What is the importance of knowing the Bible and the issues of the day in order to properly evaluate a political candidate? What is the political bent of the various news media? How can you tell? What does God require of government (Romans 13)? Who are government officials "ministers" of God? What is the danger for officials and governments that give praise to the wicked and cause fear to those who do good? Why is life the most important issue in choosing a governmental candidate? Can someone be "pro-life" and an abortion advocate? Explain. What is the position of the political parties on life? Why is protection such an important responsibility of government? What is the responsibility of police? Define justice. Why is "social justice" unjust? Why is critical race theory inherently racist and unjust? What is the balance between mercy and justice? Why should sexual morality be a political issue? What effect does sexual immorality have on a society? What is the importance of personal integrity in a candidate? What factors demonstrate integrity? What other issues should be considered when voting? No candidate will match you 100% on all issues and all will have some flaws - how do you decide between flawed candidates?