

# Political Involvement



# What We Won't Be Saying

- That love of community and country is wrong.
- That concern for conditions in our community, state, and country is altogether misguided.
- That Christians must completely abstain from any involvement in politics.
- That Christians here (and elsewhere) know what is right, and just don't care. The assumption is that we all want to do what's right.

# Questions We Do Want to Raise

- To what degree should politics occupy our time and energy?
- Just how **vocal** and **public** should we be in support of one candidate (especially one with obvious red flags)?
- Just how **vocal** and **public** should we be in support of one party?
- Is it okay to harshly criticize those in authority, and to stir up others to do the same?
- Does God give us the freedom to do everything the constitution does?
- Government or the gospel—which is more powerful?

# A Word or Two About Social Media

- “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20)—is that not still the case when we start typing on the keyboard?
- We might say, “This is just me speaking,” but the truth is that what we type reflects upon Christ, upon the church here, upon our families—for good or ill.
- If the N.T. teaches anything, it teaches us to carefully preserve our influence, and we sure do influence a lot of people through social media.
  - Colossians 4:5–6: “Walk in wisdom...”

# The Kingdom of God Comes First!

- Luke 9:59–60; Matthew 6:33
- We've got enough kingdom duties (the one that's "not of this world"—John 18:36) to keep us busy the rest of our lives (studying, praying, teaching the lost, training our children, teaching and encouraging one another, restoring those who have gone astray, etc.).
- Can we become so occupied with political interests that we neglect kingdom matters?
- "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord and fulfill it" (Colossians 4:17).

# Evil Campaign Tactics

- Lying, reviling, evil speaking—these are all condemned in Scripture (1 Cor. 6:9–10; Eph. 4:31–32; Col. 3:9), and yet these are common tactics in political campaigns.
- How vocal, how public should I be in support of someone who sees these as the path to victory? Do we want to give public endorsement to such tactics?
- Do we repeat the lies told by our candidate, while poking holes in the other candidate's story?
- We must not **endorse** or **imitate** that which is evil (Ephesians 5:11; 3 John 1:11).

# Moral Choices

- James 2:8–12.
- Abortion, homosexuality—it's certainly right to be gravely concerned about these issues.
- But what about divorce, pornography, sexual harassment, foul language, reviling speech, social injustices, etc.?
- Should we throw support behind the candidate who has been married multiple times, but opposes same sex marriage; or the candidate who endorses same sex marriage while remaining with his lawful wife?

# All Things to All People

- 1 Corinthians 9:19–23; 1 Thessalonians 5:15.
- If we become vocally and publicly partisan in our politics, we will likely lose our influence with a large number of people.
  - “I’m a democrat.” To many, that means you’re pro-abortion, and that you advocate same sex marriage.
  - “I’m a republican.” To many, that means you’re racially insensitive and favor the rich over the poor.
- Is it really worth it to become so vocal about issues like tax rates, gun control, public monuments, etc.?

# Legislation Always the Answer?

- Remember Prohibition?
  - Lasted 13 years, led to a lot of lawlessness.
- Yes, governing authorities were appointed by God to punish evil and praise good (1 Peter 2:13–17; Romans 13:1–7), but their limitations are quite obvious.
  - “What is crooked cannot be made straight...” (Eccl. 1:15).
- Think maybe our energy and influence might be better utilized in seeking to change hearts with the gospel (2 Corinthians 10:3–5).

# Blasting Those in Authority

- Exodus 22:28: “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people,” a passage quoted by Paul in Acts 23:5.
- “Honor the king” (1 Peter 2:17).
- “Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the **devil**, when he disputed about the body of Moses, **dared not** bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’” (Jude 1:8–9).
- “They are presumptuous, self willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries” (2 Peter 2:10).
- “Do not curse the king, even in your thought...for a bird of the air may carry your voice, and a bird in flight may tell the matter” (Eccl. 10:20).

# “I’ve Got an Opinion...”

- ...and I’ve just got to express it.”
- “Do not be wise in your own opinion” (Rom. 12:16).
- “Let every man be swift to hear, **slow to speak**, slow to wrath” (James 1:19).
- Slow to speak: Prov. 12:23; 14:33; 17:27–28; 29:11.
- “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life” (1 Thess. 4:11).