

CHRISTIAN POLITICS**THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE**

Our nation will very soon choose new leaders for the coming years. Many seats will be filled with the coming election, including the seat in the Oval Office. The presidency of the United States of America is the highest office in our land. Our president is the leader of the most powerful and influential nation in the world. Certainly, great thought should be put into choosing a president and other leaders of this nation. To some, the title of this article may not sound very appealing. "Christian Politics" is not something many people want to think about. Some will even deny that Christianity has anything to do with politics. Such an idea is absolutely FALSE! Not only must Christianity affect where we stand politically, but for a true Christian, it will be the most influential part of determining where we stand on political issues and, therefore, determining which candidates get our votes.

For a Christian, the thought that goes into choosing leaders must be different from the thoughts of those who do not know God. The Christian must stand upon Biblical Truth. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). The Word of God is to be our guide for all that we do; it is to be the light to the pathway that is our lives. When the Christian steps into the voting booth, he must take with him the principles of truth and righteousness as set forth by Almighty God in His Holy Book. The Christian must take into the voting booth the knowledge of and dedication to God's standard of morality. If one is truly "seeking first the kingdom of God" (Matthew 6:33) will he leave the Biblical principles of morality and righteousness outside of the voting booth? Will he try to separate that which is to be his guide for life from just one part of his life (politics and voting)? Can he really expect to set Biblical Truth aside for any reason and think God will not mind? Christians need to think about these things and really consider what is most important.

Something else that a Christian needs to carry into the voting booth is the realization that we will give account to God for our actions, "whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). Some who are in denial of this may say, "But I won't give account of what politicians do." If we give support to those who want to bring us into immorality and sin, that is what we will give account of. Do you really want to stand before God and answer the question of why you supported someone you knew wanted to bring more sin into the world? Do you really want to stand before God and answer the question of why you did not make a stand against that which is evil and sinful? When we go into the voting booth, it would do us well to recognize that God is "looking over our shoulder" while we cast those votes. Will you vote for someone who stands in direct opposition to God's principles of right and wrong?

In an attempt to defend themselves concerning these things, some Christians will say things like, "This is what I have always done." Do we really think that is a satisfactory excuse to continue doing that which is Biblically wrong? Would we try to use that excuse for anything else? Would a Christian say, "I have always committed fornication" and think there is nothing wrong with continuing? As far as sin is concerned, what is the difference in that and saying, "I have always supported political candidates who wanted to lead me and the rest of the nation further away from God and into immoral filth"? Doing something in the past does not make sin acceptable! Giving one's support to those who defend immorality, stand against God's principles of right and wrong, and would lead a nation further into sin has never been acceptable and it never will be! If you have been making the mistake of doing such a thing in the past then it is time to REPENT!

As Christians we need to look at candidates through the Bible. It is clear that neither presidential candidate is a member of the Lord's church, that is not what the discussion is over. Christians need to realize that the most important differences between

*"...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel..." (Amos 7:8)*

**LIVING THE FAITH BY FAITH**

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- I. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- II. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- III. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- V. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- VI. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- VII. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- VIII. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- IX. Be \_\_\_\_\_
- X. Be \_\_\_\_\_

**A PICTURE OF THE CHURCH**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

- I. The Church is \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_
- II. The Church is \_\_\_\_\_  
Notes: \_\_\_\_\_
- III. The Church is \_\_\_\_\_  
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- VI. The Church is \_\_\_\_\_  
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candidates are NOT what they want to do for the economy; NOT what they want to do about health care; NOT about their stand on foreign policy, or anything else like this. To the Christian, the most important differences between candidates are their stances on issues that are sinful in their very nature. It is absolutely SHAMEFUL that some of my brethren care more about the economy than about the millions of innocent lives of unborn children that are being taken. It is absolutely SHAMEFUL that some who call themselves Christians are more concerned with bank accounts than how the divine institution of marriage is being threatened by homosexual advocates and supported by many politicians. Issues that are sinful in their very nature must be most important to Christians. We have the responsibility to stand up against abortion; embryonic stem cell research; homosexuality; anti-Bible sex education; evolutionary teaching, banning God from school, and other issues that are sinful. We have the responsibility to find out where candidates stand and if they support evil organizations like the ACLU, Planned Parenthood, or gay and lesbian groups which push the above sinful issues. We need to recognize what is most important and try to save our nation from going even further into the gutter.

Despite this obvious truth concerning what must be most important to the Christian concerning political issues, some who call themselves Christians still say foolish things like, "We need to keep political issues out of the church." When the political issues are sinful, the church must be involved and make a stand for what is right. Those who make statements like the above show themselves to be in one of two conditions: 1) Spiritually immature and completely ignorant of God and His Will, or 2) In denial of God's simple Truth. It is time for us to grow up, spiritually, and acknowledge God's Truth and defend it. Let's stop voting for people just because they are affiliated with a particular political party. Let's vote for the candidates which stand most closely with God's standard of right and wrong concerning the political issues. That is a Christian's vote. What kind of vote will you cast? Those who lead this nation will make very important decisions. Some of those decisions do not involve sin and are matters of judgment. However, some do involve sin, and those decisions are far more important than the others. Our leaders will also appoint people who will make very important decisions (judges). We need to put people in office who will make good moral decisions and appoint others who will do the same.

Christian politics, that is what we need. Let us do what we can to try and save this nation from sinking further into the pit of filthy sin and immorality. We can start by voting like Christians. Who will you vote for? God is watching.

*-Tim Wilkes, II*

THE BOOK OF CHRISTIAN UNITY

New Testament Christianity is a religion that supports and necessitates unity among its members. In order to prove this immensely important point, amidst the many Biblical passages that touch on unity, two are prominent in their advancement of it. First, the prayer of Jesus Christ in John 17, especially verses twenty through twenty six, record the plea of the Lord that all who would believe on Him and obey Him be one. Second, the book of Ephesians, from start to finish, builds on the plea of the Lord to not only seek it, but also state the terms of unity and the blessings that come out of unity.

Paul, the writer of this epistle, first came in contact with the citizens of the city of Ephesus in the midst of his second missionary journey. Near the end of that journey he visited briefly in that location and left Aquila and Priscilla there to build on the work. Then during his third missionary journey, he once again stopped there, spending three years in that location, the longest he spent in any one place as recorded in scripture. The success of the work in Ephesus is summed up by Acts 19:20 in which Luke records that, *“So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.”* It was later, around A.D. 62 or 63, that during his incarceration in Rome, Paul went about to send this correspondence back to those brethren with whom he had worked for so long. However, unlike the Corinthian epistles or the Galatian epistle, the sending of this letter was apparently not spurred by doctrinal error or congregational division as Paul deals with no specific sins of which the Ephesians are guilty. It likely was sent as a letter of encouragement that was intended to be circulated amongst all the churches of Asia.

For all intents and purposes, the book of Ephesians is sometimes divided into two parts in order to understand its general outline and theme. The first part, consisting of the first three chapters, is called the doctrinal part in which Paul deals with the church and the plan of salvation. The second part, consisting of the last three chapters, is called the practical part and discusses God’s plan for the church as it functions on a daily basis.

Discussing, though, the book of Ephesians from the standpoint of Christian unity, it seems perhaps best to divide the book into its three natural sections in which the topic of unity is discussed, thereby simplifying its general message. First, addressed in Ephesians is the means of Christian unity. At the very beginning of the book Paul states, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ...”* (Ephesians 1:3). All blessings that benefit the spiritual nature of man are made manifest by Jesus Christ, and what is the greatest of all these blessings? Redemption from sin! We all, at some point, were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), *“but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,...and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus...”* (Ephesians 2:4-6). Sin condemned us all, yet by obedience God has raised us up **together** (a term of unity) and blessed us in Christ. *“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us...”* (Ephesians 2:14). There is no Jew and Gentile, but through Christ we **both** have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18). Christian unity is a blessing, the means of which is reconciliation unto God by the blood of Christ Jesus.

Second, addressed in Ephesians are the terms of Christian unity. What is important to understand about these terms of unity is that they are God’s terms, not man’s. Therefore because God has determined the standard terms of unity, in order to achieve that unity man must be wholly submissive to them and not his own. What are these terms?

*“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”* (Ephesians 4:1-7).

Often called the seven points of unity, God directed Paul to outline the points upon which unity must be attained. Man cannot differ on any of these points and still claim unity because the Bible explicitly reveals the truth regarding them. Therefore for a difference to arise, one or more parties must reject the objective truth of the Scriptures. Ultimately the litmus test for Christian unity can be applied by asking the question, are all parties involved unified with God? If so, then the terms of unity have been met.

Third, addressed in Ephesians are the blessings of unity. Simply stated, these blessings, though multitudinous, are: (1) Christian increase (Ephesians 4:16); (2) Christian edification (Ephesians 4:32); (3) Christian compassion (Ephesians 5:1-2); (4) Christian salvation (Ephesians 5:25-27); and (5) Christian companionship (Ephesians 6:10-20). However, all of these to the side, the blessing of Christian unity is Christian unity itself. How fortunate we are to dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1)!

The book of Ephesians is a marvelous message of togetherness both now in the temporal and then in the eternal. And what makes that unity possible? The blood of Christ that redeems us all and unifies us with God!

-Andy Brewer