

C. — 5 Quick Keys to — Voting Biblically by: Shane Idleman —

Politics won't save America any more than a dumbbell will save someone who is drowning; however, we cannot ignore our God-given civic responsibility and the massive impact politics has on our society. Make no mistake about it: America's leaders play an enormous role in shaping the direction of the country.

1. Vote for principles, not a particular party.

"He who rules over men must be just" (2 Samuel 23:3). We need more humble, God-fearing leaders. The Lord hates pride, arrogance, and self-centeredness. Without humility and a teachable spirit, it's difficult, if not impossible, to govern properly. Humility does not mean that leaders become passive pawns, but that they live in total surrender to God; they're more concerned with God's opinion than opinion polls. It's been said that the quality of our government depends more upon the character of our leaders than upon our laws. But be careful—many use "religious talk" and twist the Scriptures to support unbiblical initiatives. For example, in one setting leaders will express their religious convictions and quote the Bible, but in another setting they'll vote for partial-birth abortion and against protecting babies who survive late-term abortions. Judge what they "do" more than what they "say." Voting records are available on-line.

2. Don't immediately put "social responsibility" above "morality."

For instance, there are legislators who support partial-birth abortion, even when the life of the mother is not at risk. Partial-birth abortion is a process where an unborn, often healthy, baby's body is delivered feet first, often near full term, until only the head remains inside the womb. The head remains in the womb so that the abortion is not considered murder [in man's eyes]. Once a baby is fully delivered, his/her life cannot be terminated. The physician then punctures the back of the child's skull with a sharp instrument and removes the child's brains before delivering the dead baby. This is a travesty, and our nation has the blood of innocent children on her hands. When human life is devalued, atrocities such as the holocaust, the slave trade, and abortion occur. However, many Christians will put the topic of abortion conveniently behind the environment, the economy, and health care—or they'll fail to mention it at all. Although these other issues are very important, when medical professionals can throw mutilated babies in a trash can after a day's worth of abortions and we continue to vote for those who support these gruesome procedures, our consciences have been seared. God help us when we destroy what He has created.

3. Don't hide behind the excuse, "I don't want to get involved."

As citizens, we are given the privilege, for now, to place people in positions of leadership. Whether we like it or not, we are involved. Millions are not registered to vote; and millions of registered voters stay at home. We'll stand in line to see a movie, but we won't stand in line to vote and elect leaders who will affect the direction of our country. This makes a statement about what we value—and isn't it sad?

4. Engage, not enrage, the culture.

Since evangelicals are often viewed as irrational, conceited, narrow-minded, and unintelligent, we need to engage the culture with humility, wisdom, patience, and discernment. Why would God ordain a government such as ours in America and not ask us to be involved? That's why it's important to know both sides of political "hot buttons"—knowledge allows us to make the right decisions. If you decide to speak out, articulate your message clearly, patiently, and wisely. But always make sure your actions are backed by a clear biblical mandate. Respond; don't react! Abraham Lincoln once suggested, "Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt." A reaction often calls for an apology, while a response generally thinks things through, and often, no apologies are needed. However, extreme anger-driven demonstration and protest is often not the answer, neither is a total lack of involvement—there must be a balance. Our goal should not be to come across as harsh, overly critical, or arrogant, but to speak the truth in love—engage, not enrage, the culture.

5. Apply Jesus' teachings contextually.

The primary role of government is to secure our God-given rights. The state and the church are to be separate in their duties and functions, but interwoven in their core beliefs and principles. The institution of government was created by God to govern man—to protect and defend, and to administer justice. This is why it's unwise to apply, as some do, many of Jesus' teachings, such as "turning the other cheek," to the institution of government. Contextually, Jesus was referring to personal affronts and insults, not to the administration of justice. One of the primary purposes of government is to protect those who obey the law from those who break it. And this sometimes refers to war. Although war is detestable, it may be necessary to restrain evil—we cannot apply the Sermon on the Mount, for example, to war and the proper function of government. (Refer to Romans 13:1-7.)

[Excerpts from One Nation Above God: www.OneNationAboveGod.com]