

## Lecture #14: Voting (Detailed Notes)

*"For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisors make victory sure"*  
(Prov 11:14)

***Purpose of this Lecture: To address the question of whether a Christian should vote, and if so, how to do it***

- o I know some Christians that:
  - o Refuse to vote - it is a corrupt system, why participate in it?
  - o Vote pure party lines
  - o Wait until the very last moment to figure out how they are going to vote
  - o Vote how they "feel" about something, not addressing Biblical principles
- o There is a need for guidance to be provided to our leaders
- o There is a need to select godly leaders
- o What should we be looking for in leaders

***Question: Why wouldn't a Christian vote?***

- o Won't allow themselves to be forced to compromise on principle
- o To lazy or comfortable
- o Not enough time (how about TV; sports; hobbies; naps...)
- o Concern it would do no good ("look how big Goliath is...")
- o "Who am I to force my views onto someone else?"
- o Don't believe it is our responsibility
- o Believe it is a corrupt system, why should we be involved with it?

***Question: Which is better, a Christian that votes in an ignorant fashion, or one that doesn't vote at all?***

- o Axiomatic in politics that on any issue or person the immediate response is 40% no; 40% yes; 20% (?)
- o One vote can make a difference, however, very unlikely
- o Miss America Contest - (urban legend) one year elected Miss Cordiality by receiving two votes

***1. Introduction: This nation, as any nation, relies upon godly counsel in order to make decisions - when this is removed, everyone suffers (Prov 11:14)***

- a. Three sources of guidance can be in view in Prov 11:14
  - o Without strong, righteous leadership in a nation, the people will go their own way and the nation will cease to be a nation (Everyone does what is right in his own eyes - **Judges 21:25 (Prov 29:2; 11:10; 1 Kings 12)**)
  - o Without godly council provided to leadership (those in authority), kings will go astray (**Prov 15:22; 29:12; 20:18; 24:5,6**)
  - o Ultimately, without a ruler seeking the Lord's will, he will fail (**Jer 17:9; Prov 20:18**)
- b. What is the 'fall' referring to? (Inside and Outside threats)
  - o Potentially being overrun by an enemy, since "victory" is mentioned in this verse, referring to war or battles (also, slavery; bondage; exploitation; utterly destroyed)
  - o A nation can fall internally into:
    - o Wickedness (moral decay)
    - o Disorder
    - o Death
    - o Violence
    - o Injustice
    - o Rebellion
    - o Poverty/famine/pestilence
- c. Implications of giving advice in this verse:
  - o Implies it is guidance that the nation needs to follow (correct guidance; or at least godly advice along with ungodly)
  - o Implies it is consistent with God's will
  - o Implies it is listened to and followed
  - o Remember, ultimately, God is the source of all knowledge and wisdom - even amongst pagans
- d. Just as a king of old asked chosen men for advice, so our country asks its people for advice

- o Who is to rule over us?
- o What laws are to be made? (what morality is to be legislated? What standard will we use?)
- o What evil is to be punished?
- o What good is to be commended?
- o How are tax moneys to be used? (national and local priorities)

## **2. Christians have a very important role in this country!**

- a. We are to pray to our sovereign God for those in authority over us (**1 Tim 2:1-4**), that they would:
  - o Not be ashamed of setting a Christian example publicly, if Christians (**Matt 7:21-23**)
  - o Come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ if they are not believers
  - o Realize their accountability before God to make righteous decisions
  - o Rely upon godly advice and seek the Lord's will in all matters (**Prov 24:5-6**)
  - o Not compromise Biblical principles, but make decisions knowing they are accountable to God first - above men (**Acts 4:19-20**)
  - o Be diligent in their work, striving with all the and energy and ability that God provides (**Prov 12:24; Col 1:29; Rom 13:6**)
  - o Not gather around them ungodly council (**Prov 29:12**)
  - o Set an example of righteousness in their own lives (be examples for the nation)
  - o Exercise their God ordained responsibilities and not abuse their power
  - o Do good, and in doing so would "silence the ignorant talk of foolish men" (**1 Peter 2:15**)
  - o Be willing to call "evil" for what it is (**Isa 5:20**)
  - o Be teachable (**Prov 18:15; 20:12; 25:12**)
- b. We are to encourage our leaders personally, to do what is right and just:
  - o Be informed on the issues being addressed, so we can give godly advice to our representatives (**Ecc 7:27; Acts 17:11** (good Berean principle))
  - o Calling; writing; FAX'ing; E-mail; financial support; letters of encouragement
  - o Holding up God's standard to them
  - o Encourage the creation and enforcement of righteous laws and the removal of ungodly ones
  - o Encourage them to withdraw from actions and decisions that are not part of their rightful responsibility
  - o **See Handout: Christian Survey's, Form Letters and Petitions**
  - o **See Handout: Communicating with our Elected National Officials**
- c. We are to personally encourage our leaders to fulfill their Biblical roles (whether believers or not) to:
  - o Punish the evildoer (**Rom 13:3-4; 1 Tim 1:8-11; 1 Peter 2:13-14**)
  - o Commend the good (**1 Peter 2:13-14; Rom 13:3**)
  - o Maintain peace in the land (**1 Tim 2:3; Jer 29:7**)
- d. We are to spiritually minister to our leaders
  - o Let them know we are praying for them
  - o Evangelize them, speaking truth in love
  - o We don't have to Biblically instruct them every time we express a view to them!
- e. We are to pay our taxes out of obedience to the authority over us (**Rom 13:6-7**)
- f. We are to give our leaders respect and honor as it is due
  - o Without grumbling
  - o Give a good report where it is due
  - o Do not maliciously spread evil reports when truth is not known
  - o Be careful of jokes that tear down and do not build up (**Rom 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17**)
- g. We are to vote: This is another way to directly provide advice to our nation and leadership in:
  - o Punishing the evildoer
    - o What constitutes evil? (actions, not matters of conscience) - the moral code
      - o Blasphemous use of the Lord's name (why is this not a verbal "hate" crime? (**Ex 20:7**; third commandment)
      - o Restrictions on worship services (**Ex 20:8-11**; fourth commandment)
      - o Murder (**Ex 20:13**; sixth commandment)(includes abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, etc.)
      - o Adultery (**Ex 20:14**; seventh commandment)(includes pornography,

- homosexuality, etc.)
  - o Theft (**Ex 20:15**; eighth commandment)
  - o Slander (**Ex 20:16**; ninth commandment)
  - o Other sins as defined in the moral laws
  - o What degree of punishment is appropriate?
  - o What degree of mercy should be shown?
- o Commending the good - what constitutes this?
  - o Tax exempt status for churches, nonprofit organizations that help in times of trouble
  - o Honors for examples of virtue, self sacrifice, character, wisdom, bravery, etc.
  - o Adequate pay for law enforcement officials, military, etc.
  - o Others?
- o Maintaining peace in the land - what constitutes this? (**1 Tim 2:3; Jer 29:7**)
  - o Enforcing just laws
  - o Swift, fair, unbiased justice
  - o Military adequately maintained and paid for to support national defense
- o Protecting the orphans, the widows, the aliens in the land (**Deut 10:17-19; 24:19-22; Lev 19:9-10; 23:22**)
- o Provide godly examples of lives of holiness and character for others to emulate
  - o O.T. Israel kings set the pattern for the rest of the nation
  - o The men of the Sanhedrin noted Peter & John “were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13)
  - o The role of “Voting Guides” (**See Handout: Voter’s Guide Discussion**)
- h. We must approach voting:
  - o Prayerfully
  - o With discernment
  - o Knowledgeably (not in an ignorant fashion - ignorant Christian vote is more dangerous than no vote at all)
  - o With great care and diligence

***“If we don’t vote and tell the nation who we want to rule over us, and what laws should be made and enforced - who will?”***

- o Great freedoms in this nation - communicate with our leaders, establish laws and who our leaders should be - voting is just one aspect (not to leave it at that!)
- i. Should the pulpit be used to speak out for or against a candidate or proposition?

### ***3. What Should a Christian look for in a Candidate before Voting for him?***

- a. Qualifications relating to their character
  - o Elder and Deacon qualifications are a good start (**1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9**)
  - o Have they taken personal responsibility for any prior transgressions and has repented, and learned from them, understand why they were wrong! (sins of their youth)(**Prov 28:13\***)
- b. Qualifications relating to their spiritual condition
  - o Is the man a believer
  - o Does he have a personal testimony relating to Christ
  - o Does he have a good church standing (remember, virtually all members of Congress list some form of church or denominational affiliation)
  - o Does he seek godly council and have godly men as advisors?
- c. Qualifications relating to understanding of the position (**Prov 22:29**)
  - o Experience in the area (not to compromise, but to foresee and prevent compromising)
  - o Knowledge and understanding of the issues
  - o Previous voting record on issues (Be careful of “Moral” voting percentages!)
- d. Must our leaders be men only?
  - o Bible has little that addresses this issue external to the home, church and nation of Israel
    - o In the family, the husband is the spiritual and moral leader (**Eph 5:22-30; 1 Cor 11:3;**

**1 Tim 2:11; 1 Peter 3:1-5)**

- o Within the church, a woman is not to have authority over a man (**Eph 2:12-15; 1 Cor 14:33-35; 1 Tim 2:12-15**) (remember, not many men are qualified to lead)
- o Within ancient Israel, a woman ruling over the nation was a shameful situation (**Isa 3:12**) (Deborah; **Judges 4:1-10** judged during a evil time in Israel)
- o Principle in **Eph 2:12-15 and 1 Cor 11:6-10** draws from the original creation and the role of men and women - implies that this relationship is true universally and for all time (women are to be under the authority of men)
- o Exceptions? (no qualified men; greatly gifted woman; temporary only; others?)
- e. Principle vs Pragmatic
  - o No man meets the qualifications completely (**Eccl 7:20**)!
  - o What should you do if it appears to be a choice of the "lesser of two evils"? (always the case?)
  - o What should you do if a third candidate is by far superior to the other two, but has virtually no hope of being elected?
    - o Vote your conscience before the Lord
    - o Each man's life is in the hands of the Lord, He is sovereign
    - o Is "a little better" going in the right direction, then look forward to the next election
  - o Remember, the heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord (**Prov 21:1**)
  - o Ultimately, God is sovereign in all of mens lives, and elections! There is great comfort in this!
    - o He raised up Pharaoh to fulfill His purposes (**Rom 9:17**)
    - o He raises up the President to fulfill His purposes

#### ***4. Information/Statistics Relating to Elections***

- a. According to public opinion polls, only 20-25% of the American Christian community actually votes in US elections
- b. In Australia - it is mandatory for everyone to vote otherwise they will be fined
- c. In South Africa - voting was limited to those that were educated and could "understand" the issues
- d. In colonial US most colonies restricted voting to land owners, and most limited voting to members of a certain church (Royal colonies - Church of England (Anglican); New England - Congregational church)
- e. Some voting statistics
  - o In the midterm voting year of 1998 (note (1)):
    - o The total votes needed to have switched six key districts in order for the Democrats to have regained control of the House in this election - 9,537
    - o Total eligible voters who did not cast their ballots - 119,450,000 (highest on record); only 37% of all eligible voters actually voted
    - o Percentage decline in the number of election stories run by major networks in 1998, compared with 1994 midterm elections - 73%
    - o Highest voting turnout - Minnesota (59.5%)(Jesse "The Body" Ventura elected Governor; Lowest turnout - Virginia (17.7%)(not statewide races)
  - o In the 1996 Presidential election, 54.2% of the voting age population vote; 50 million eligible voters are not registered
  - o In 1992, 67% of Christians did not vote
  - o Power of one vote (unknown sources):
    - o 1868 - one vote saved Andrew Johnson from impeachment
    - o 1960 - one vote per neighborhood gave John F. Kennedy victory over Richard Nixon

*Note (1) "Time"; November 16, 1998; Numbers column, pp 35*