

4 Things to Consider During Tonight's Debate

Tonight is the first presidential debate, and this whole election season has me floored. Maybe you identify. Like many American Christians, I find myself in a deep quandary when faced with choosing between our presidential candidates. Frankly, it's because I don't find any of them to be very *presidential*. Are you with me?

To me, both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump are deeply flawed candidates. And to be honest, I don't see any of the other candidates having as much as a snowball's chance in you know where of winning the election. What are Catholics, Protestants, Baptists and all who profess to be doing our best to follow Christ to do? For starters, we need to make sure we really are doing our best—and that's not possible if we check out and don't vote.

By saying I'm "floored," I don't mean that I'm flabbergasted. I mean I'm *on my knees*. You should be too. If you aren't seeking God, asking Him to move clearly and powerfully, you've checked out. And it's more than a shame; it's a sin. We can't care about truth and love if we aren't doing all we can to minimize lies and hatred.

As you watch tonight's debate, here are a few things to watch for that will help determine how you will vote (Click here to see a side-by-side comparison of where Clinton and Trump stand):

1. Remember that we are electing a president, not a pastor. Jesus is not running for president. And even if He were, I'm fairly confident we wouldn't elect Him. Remember how we treated Him the first time around?

Both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump identify as Christians,

but both have said and done things—often—that defy Christ-following behavior. In this election, I don't think we get to choose a candidate who models our values. *I think, instead, that we have no choice but to vote for the candidate who will best enable us to live our values as Christians and allow us to encourage others toward the same without obstruction.*

Prayerfully consider which candidate shows the *greater* potential to allow Christianity and Christian values to flourish. Which candidate would pose the greater *threat* to the free expression of Christianity and the support and spread of Christian values?

2. Look for what they say or imply about our Constitution, and especially the First Amendment, which recognizes and protects our God-given freedoms, as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Which candidate seems more likely to protect, preserve and defend the Constitution and First Amendment? If these are regulated or belittled, your ability as a Christian to freely love and serve Christ—and to teach others to do the same—will be directly and significantly hindered.

Keep in mind that there are many persecuted and imprisoned Christians in other countries who would love to live in a country where religious freedom were a protected freedom, a right that no one could hinder.

3. Remember that it's not just about electing the president but about the appointment of Supreme Court justices and the next 30 to 50 years of America. Over the next four years, the Supreme Court will make decisions about the following:

- Planned Parenthood and the protection of the unborn
- The rights of private citizens to own guns
- The definition of marriage
- The definition of gender
- Religious freedom
- School choice

The president will also appoint dozens of lower court justices. As these justices go, so goes our nation. *Permanently.* (Here's a short video to help you understand how important the High Court is).

Look for what the candidates may say about the kinds of judges they would nominate, and their views on the issues, above.

4. Think about the America your children and your children's children will grow up in as a result of the decision we make on Nov. 8. Do you like what America has become over the past seven years? Would you like our current course to continue, or do you think we need to change course? Have the past seven years been friendly or antagonistic toward Christianity and biblical teachings? What if we have more of the same?

Think deeply. Pray hard. Act accordingly. The decision that we will collectively make on Nov. 8 will have consequences for many generations to come. If you sit this election out, and leave it up to others to decide, don't complain when the America you once loved becomes one that makes you squirm. Ignore your freedoms and they will go away. {eoa}

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Helping Your Child Grow in Spirit-Led Intercession

“Lord, I just thank you for this wonderful day today, and I pray we’d have a wonderful day tomorrow. Amen.” This typical bedtime prayer was repeated often when I tucked my children into bed at night. After several nights in a row, I asked them if they had anything else they wanted to talk to God about. If I made suggestions, they were very open to adding them, but rarely initiated deeper conversation with their Maker.

I contemplated that perhaps they needed training when it came to prayer. We certainly spend a lot of time teaching them how to put their clothes away, the toothpaste cap back on, and saying please and thank you. Scripture supports this idea of learning to pray. The disciples said in Luke 11:1b, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

Jesus then proceeded to teach them the Lord’s prayer. This model prayer includes several elements. As a teen I learned at church camp the acrostic A-C-T-S which is taken from the basics found within the Lord’s prayer. Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. These are big words for my 5-year-old daughter, twin 8-year-olds, and 11-year-old son. I asked God to help me teach them to pray in a way that would go deeper than their surface prayers for a good day, but at the same time not be insincere, fancy words they repeated with little understanding. We tried to break it down this way:

Adoration. How could they praise God each day in a way that wouldn’t get rote or mechanical? I got a piece of construction paper, and we spent a night brainstorming things about God that were good: powerful, loving, awesome, holy. They had fun coming up with words about God. Then I asked them some of the names for God found in the Bible. With a little coaxing they thought of: Rock, Shepherd, Jesus, King of Kings. Soon we had

filled the page with different ideas. I bought a cute white frame and hung the list up in their room. At bedtime they could each pick one of the things on the list to begin their prayer.

Confession. This part turned out to be the most surprising. None of them could recall any bad thing they had done that day. I was floored. I had a long list for each of them fresh on my mind. I tried to hold back as long as I could. I turned to one of them, "What about hitting your sister today?" "Oh, yeah." Then on to the next child, "Remember how you threw that fit and got in trouble this morning?" "I had forgotten about that." They were all very willing to confess their sins to God and even excited that they had something for this part of prayer. They just needed some training and direction.

Thanksgiving. This one comes most naturally when children pray. They were always grateful for the "wonderful day." Now we tried to be more specific. What are we thankful for? Yes, we had trips to the park, friends over, and new toys to thank God about. However, we talked about some basic things that we often take for granted. Freedom to worship, our own copy of God's Word, clean water, food, eyes to see, legs to run. Their tender hearts were telling their Creator that they had much to appreciate. They don't always remember these blessings in day-to-day life when surrounded by ads and commercials tempting them to want more. However, at night when their hearts are soft, they often recognize God's provision when a loving parent reminds them of all He has done.

Supplication. Big word. I told them we were basically just asking God for things. We can ask for things we need or want, but we also want to pray for others. A friend of mine shared a great system that she used to help her kids remember what they were praying for each day. We made another poster for the wall that looked like this:

Monday – Missionaries. Here we wrote the name of two specific families we know and support. We prayed for their children and tried to remember to share any details about their families we got in regular prayer updates in their emails or letters.

Tuesday – Teachers. Each child prayed for their own school teacher. We also put the names of their piano teacher, Sunday school teacher, or coaches. If they didn't know what to pray, we asked God to give their teachers wisdom and endurance.

Wednesday – Widows and orphans. We prayed for specific ones we knew. We prayed for Great-Grandma, a woman at church, and for little Alex and Robelina who we support through an organization that provides opportunities to sponsor needy children. Our son got to meet Alex last year on a mission trip to Guatemala. It was incredible for him to meet the boy we had prayed for on so many Wednesdays.

Thursday – Those who don't know Jesus personally. Each child had plenty of people who were school friends, neighbors, or extended family members that they hope they will get to see in heaven one day. It made the celebration that much sweeter when we saw a Japanese family we had been praying for in our neighborhood come to know Christ.

Friday – Friends and Family. We listed out the cousins, aunts & uncles, grandparents, and each child picked one or two special friends. Living in Ohio with my family in Texas and my husband's family in Canada, praying for family helps my kids feel more connected with people they may only get to see once a year.

After we implemented our new approach to prayer, we found our kids' prayer lives growing stronger. It wasn't a perfect system. However, they are learning that prayer is talking with God about anything and everything. They are remembering who He is, where they fall short, what they are thankful for, and asking for God's help for others. Even without looking at the

lists on the wall, we've moved past talking generically about a "wonderful day" to deeper connection with Christ.

But we're still working on that toothpaste cap.

Melissa Spoelstra is a popular women's conference speaker, Bible teacher and writer who is madly in love with Jesus and passionate about helping women of all ages to seek Christ and know Him more intimately through serious Bible study. She is the author of several Bible studies and *Total Family Makeover: 8 Steps to Making Disciples at Home*. Spoelstra describes herself as a small-town girl from East Texas, but now resides Dublin, Ohio, with her church planter/pastor husband of 20 years and their four children.

To keep up with Melissa Spoelstra, visit [. You can also follow her on Facebook \(AuthorMelissaSpolestra\) and Twitter \(@MelSpoelstra\).](#)

Thousands Accept Jesus in 10-Day Revival

Hundreds of missionaries flooded Kenya to pray for a revival. They were not prepared to see the thousands of lives that were changed just 10 days later.

More than 640 missionaries from around the globe gathered to bring revival to a Kenyan village called Kakamega. Their mission was simple: show the love of God in practical ways.

They visited prisons, provided treatment to those affected by parasitic fleas and preached to anyone with open ears. These missionaries reached tens of thousands of people.

“In all, 72,115 people in Kakamega were reached and 6,944 received Christ as their savior,” one missionary told *Africa Enterprise*.

Joel was one of the many street children who gave their lives to Christ.

“I feel I have hope after being preached to,” he said.

Joel is not the only one who experienced hope. One woman’s marriage was saved by the hope the missionaries brought with them.

Martha was furious when she found out her husband cheated on her. She went through her house destroying her possessions when she heard a knock on her door from the missionaries, wanting to know why she was so filled with rage.

Their kindness calmed her anger and she gave her life over to Christ. Her husband soon came home and was so overcome by the love of God that the missionaries shared, he decided to accept Jesus too.

Before the missionaries left, Martha and her husband prayed together asking God to restore their marriage.

Thousands of others had similar stories of reconciliation to God and renewed hope for the future.

While only a few hundred missionaries came to Kenya, tens of thousands were impacted and forever changed.

President Obama Has Shredded What Was Left of the First Amendment

Under the Founders' Constitution—that is, the one written by the Founders, not the one mangled beyond recognition by the Supreme Court—the only entity that can violate the First Amendment is Congress.

The very first word in the First Amendment is “Congress.” The First Amendment was intended as a restraint on Congress and Congress alone. It is simply impossible for any other entity—be it a state, a county, a city, a school district, a school teacher or a student—to violate the First Amendment for the simple reason that it wasn't written to restrain them.

Only Congress can violate the Founders' Constitution, and it can do so in only two ways. First, it can violate the Establishment Clause by picking one Christian denomination and making it the official church of the United States. As long as Congress doesn't do that, it can do anything it wants with regard to religious expression. It can pay a chaplain to pray Christian prayers and proclaim as many national days of prayer as it would like.

States under the Founders' Constitution are free to regulate religious expression in any way they would like without any interference from the federal government. States can even have an established religion if they want to, and at the time of the Founding, 10 of them did.

Secondly, only Congress can violate the Free Exercise clause because it applies specifically and exclusively to Congress. Congress—and by extension the entire federal government, including the judiciary—is flatly prohibited from interfering with the free exercise of the Christian religion in any way,

shape or form. Any such effort on the part of any branch of the federal government, whether it's the legislative branch, the executive branch or the judicial branch, is flatly and permanently forbidden by the Founders' Constitution.

The federal government has zero authority to tell schools what they may and may not do with regard to Bible reading in classrooms, prayer at assemblies and graduation ceremonies, or the posting of the Ten Commandments on school room walls. Those matters are for state and local authorities to decide. Period.

And since the First Amendment has never been amended, it means the same thing today as it did when it was enacted in 1791. It is as unconstitutional today as it was 225 years ago for the federal government to intrude in matters of religious expression.

This makes a new publication from the United States Commission on Civil Rights an egregiously unconstitutional and dangerous document. In fact, it may be the most dangerous document ever produced by a federal government bureaucracy. It tramples, shreds and mutilates the very constitutional rights it is supposed to protect.

The Commission just published a new 306-page briefing with the utterly deceptive title "Peaceful Coexistence." However, when it comes to a clash between the gay agenda and religious liberty, there is nothing peaceful about this document, nor is there any discernible co-existence of any kind. Religious liberty is forced to kneel in humble and abject submission before our new pro-homosexual overlords.

Martin Castro, chairman of the Commission, says, "The phrases 'religious liberty' and 'religious freedom' will stand for nothing except hypocrisy so long as they remain code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, Christian supremacy or any form of

intolerance.”

In other words, if you're a Christian, you are a bigot. Period.

Castro argues that the Establishment Clause, which was intended only to prevent Congress from picking one Christian denomination and making it the official church of the United States, now authorizes government at all levels to brutally repress the free exercise of Christianity anywhere it comes into conflict with special rights based on sexually deviant behavior.

Says the Commission, “Civil rights protections ensuring nondiscrimination ... are of preeminent importance in American jurisprudence.” Translation: Special rights based on non-normative sexuality trump the First Amendment every day of the week. It's no longer the Constitution which is of “pre-eminent importance,” it is imaginary rights manufactured out of the ether which triumph over explicit rights guaranteed in the Constitution itself.

The Constitution is no longer the supreme law of the land. The homosexual agenda is.

Under the Commission's radicalized view of the First Amendment, homosexual activists win every time over Christian bakers, florists and photographers and even churches who are simply engaging in the free exercise of their religious values.

I've often said that the homosexual agenda represents the single greatest threat to religious liberty in the history of the Republic. This document is indisputable proof. If there is any conflict between the homosexual agenda and Christian liberty, the homosexual agenda wins—every single time.

With regard to the election, there is little question that Hillary Clinton's sympathies lie with the most aggressive

proponents of homosexuality and transgenderism. There is not a single First Amendment right that will be safe under a regime led by someone with such views.

Donald Trump has come out forcefully on behalf of religious liberty, but it remains to be seen if he fully understands the lethal danger the homosexual agenda poses to our first freedom and will take a principled stand against it. It would be helpful for voters to know, for instance, where he stands on the Equality Act, which will enshrine the entire homosexual agenda and essentially criminalize Christianity in the process.

The left claims their motto is “Co-Exist.” But in reality, as the Commission on Civil Rights reveals, it is really “Co-exist-or else.”

Whether religious liberty and the Constitution itself has a future in America is at stake in this election. Let’s hope and pray that voters choose wisely. {eoa}

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Why the Church Absolutely Needs to Talk About Politics

“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people mourn” (Prov. 29:2).

Pastor Shane Idleman uses this verse to highlight exactly why the church needs to talk about politics from the pulpit.

“What cracks me up about this topic—politics in the pulpit—is

the gospel permeates every area of our lives,” Idleman says in a recent sermon. “So to remove things like abortion, gay marriage, the direction of our nation, to say, ‘Oh no, these don’t matter, we just need to talk about the gospel.’ Yeah, the gospel’s our primary focus but ... ”

Watch the video to see the rest.

9/11/16 “WHEN THE WICKED MAN RULES” – Pastor Shane Idleman from Westside Christian Fellowship on Vimeo.

Richard Viguerie: Hillary Clinton Poses a Danger to the Peaceful Lives of Ordinary Americans

The 2016 Presidential Election is now about six weeks away—a bit more than a fortnight—but close enough that it should concentrate the mind of every conservative and right-of-center voter in America on what the actual effects of a Hillary Clinton presidency would be on their lives and the lives of their fellow citizens.

Accordingly, [the booklet *Hail Hillary: Is There A Clinton Progressive Police State In America’s Future?*] isn’t about why conservatives should support Donald Trump, or Gary Johnson or Jill Stein or any other candidate running for president. Instead, it is a cannonball through the doors of the Ivory Towers of those “conservatives” who continue to obdurately claim that a Hillary Clinton presidency might not be that bad, that the country can recover after four or eight

years, and that her policies won't be aimed at marginalizing, if not outlawing, the conservative worldview.

To outline and explain these dangers I asked a group of conservative leaders to share with me their assessment of what a Hillary Clinton presidency would mean to those Americans who hold traditional Judeo-Christian values and who believe in American exceptionalism.

Most of these leaders had not backed Donald Trump during the Republican Primaries, but the response was immediate and overwhelming—far beyond the expected pro forma election year support for the Republican candidate for president.

In fact, each of these respected conservative leaders saw Hillary Clinton not as merely a wrongheaded political opponent, but as a genuine threat to the future of the conservative movement and to the domestic tranquility of this great country.

The dangers that these leaders saw in a Hillary Clinton presidency represent not obscure Capitol Hill policy differences, but dangers to the peaceful lives of ordinary Americans.

What they told me was that Americans who believe in the right-to-life; Americans who believe that marriage between one man and one woman is Biblically ordained; Americans who own guns; Americans who believe in the rule of law and protecting our borders are all at risk. Perhaps most at risk from a Clinton presidency are those Americans who believe that the Constitution is the law that governs and restrains government.

Richard Viguerie transformed American politics in the 1960s and '70s by pioneering the use of direct mail fundraising in the political and ideological spheres. He used computerized direct mail fundraising to help build the conservative movement, which then elected Ronald Reagan as the first

conservative president of the modern era. As the “Funding Father of the conservative movement,” Viguerie motivated millions of Americans to participate in politics for the first time, greatly expanding the base of active citizenship. He is our era’s equivalent of Tom Paine, using a direct mail letter rather than a pamphlet to deliver his call to arms.

Before You Give Up, Remember These 3 Important Truths

I feel incredibly worn . I’m exhausted. The thought of getting the kids going on school work is overwhelming and daunting. And the school year hasn’t even started for us yet! Isn’t that *nuts*? And I am the professional teacher—yeah, the one with the university degree. ‘ve been doing this for 11 years already! Then I was hit with a revelation as I was flipping through the recent Wal-Mart flyer. Although I may be feeling wilted and weary, I am still so thankful that my kids are home with me. This is the truth I need to hold on to—the truth I want to share with you and encourage you with.

3 Important Truths to Remember When You Are Ready to Quit

Thanks, Wal-Mart

Yeah, so I was looking through the Wal-Mart flyer while enjoying my morning cup of coffee. My husband was sitting beside me—we both work from home, which is such a wonderful blessing. A huge box of Play-Doh caught my eye and I told my husband that I wanted to get it for our youngest daughter. His first response was “Really?”

I had to explain to him that our daughter loves to play with Play-Doh and this massive box of various colors would make her day. What a wonderful 'Back-To-Homeschool' gift, right? This explanation caused a good discussion between my husband and me. And I realized that the fact that I am tired and weary doesn't even matter compared to the truth we comprehended in that moment.

Remaining Child-like

You see, our youngest daughter is 10-years old. And she still loves to create with Play-Doh. Most kids her age have very little interest in something like Play-Doh. It would be 'too babyish' in their eyes. And, yet, our daughter either doesn't know this or she just doesn't care if she does.

My husband and I discussed how she has been able to keep so much of her childhood innocence. And in this day and age, that is quite a feat! Seriously, the worst bad word she knows at 10-years old is 'stupid'. If you asked a public-schooled kid what the worst bad word that they knew was, I am sure we'd be embarrassed at hearing it.

The Truth: At home, she can just be a kid and enjoy her childhood. She doesn't know any different, even with older siblings. She is having a delightful childhood – the way it should be. This truth brings me confidence and joy in our family's decision to home educate.

Displaying Christ

My oldest daughter, Sarah, went to teen camp this summer. Her friend had not been able to make it this year, so she was going 'on her own.' She would not know anyone in her cabin. At first, she was somewhat unsure about this arrangement. However, a week before she was scheduled to leave, she came to me with the most amazing idea.

She told me how she remembered a girl at camp last year who

had scars on her arms from cutting. The thought that this girl was in so much emotional pain bothered Sarah so much that she hasn't forgotten her. This prompted Sarah to begin asking God to show her the opportunities to show His love to the hurting girls at camp while she was there.

When Sarah told me about her prayer, I was in awe of her heart and her request. She was not going to camp for herself. It wasn't about her. She was going so that she could minister to someone else.

The Truth: When I am drained and worn-out just by the idea of starting school again, I think about this occasion and I know that my chief purpose in home educating my kids is so they can share the love of Christ with those who desperately need it. And the fruit is abundant.

Caring for the Heart ... and Body

I was done with seeing my son wear jeans that were a couple of inches above his ankles. I forced him to head to the mall with me to find new jeans that didn't make him look like he was waiting for a flood. This kid is 5 feet 11 inches tall at 12 years old!

We found a couple of pairs at one store and were heading off to another when I started chatting with an acquaintance I ran into. About 10 minutes passed by and I heard my son stumbling around behind me and people gasping and asking if he was OK. I turned around to see him on the floor. He had passed out. I helped him up and when he felt better, we went home. I booked a doctor appointment right away.

We had blood work done and were called back in only to get more blood work done. I really don't think it is anything serious. My son has grown so much in the last few months and I think it is just taking time for his entire body to adjust. He is tired and needs a lot of sleep right now.

The Truth: In the moments I am pondering my own fatigue and exhaustion, I can reflect on the needs of my son and know that I can give him the rest and care he needs right now and not worry about missing assignments or skipped lessons. We have the opportunity to go at our own pace and pick up where we left off if necessary. This not only cares for my son's physical and health needs, but also for his heart.

Reflection

I hope these three truths encourage your weary heart. I pray that you will be able to find your own truths to hold on to and remember during those moments when you are ready to quit. Write those truths down and place them where you will see them. They will serve as a good reminder for those tough days. Share your own moments of truth below.

A Helpful Resource

For additional biblical parenting instruction, you may find "Parenting for God's Glory", a self-paced eCourse, beneficial. There will be a *free* webinar on Tuesday, September 27 at 1 p.m. PST. I will be sharing about the best parenting advice I've ever received. Registrants will be given a special promotional price for the eCourse! {eoa}

Aimee Imbeau is a Princess of the Most High King, a daughter to her heavenly Father. She loves talking about Him and to Him! Aimee is a wife to a tall, dark and handsome guy. She has been married since 1998 – that feels like eons ago. They have three fantastic kids, whom she has home schooled since the beginning of their education. She is a home school support teacher with a little DL school in BC, Canada. She has been supporting and encouraging home school moms since 2004.

The Power of One Hour of Repentance

What's it going to be like after the resurrection? Nothing in this world compares to the blissful thought of entering into the eternal reward of the World to Come.

In that place of "springs of living water," God will "wipe away all tears from their eyes. There shall be no more death. Neither shall there be any more sorrow nor crying nor pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4). The reward of the World to Come utterly transcends our ability to describe or even imagine: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9). The sages say that "one hour of the bliss of the World to Come is better than the entire life of this world."

Despite that, there is one thing in this world that is even better than the whole World to Come. The Jewish sages explain that one single hour spent repenting and doing good in this world is greater than the whole life of the World to Come. In the Talmud, it says:

One hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is better than the entire life of the World to Come; and one hour of spiritual bliss in the World to Come than the entire life of this World (4:21).

How can a single hour in this world be better than the infinite delights of Eden, the revealed presence of God experienced eye to eye, and the total restoration of our spiritual potential? Because in the World to Come, repentance and good deeds don't really have any value.

Sin is really possible for us only in this existence. When we enter the World to Come, we will still retain our free will,

so perhaps the potential for sin still exists, but in practical terms, there is no sin, because we will be like the angels who behold the infinite light of God. We will be like the Messiah, who beholds the glory of the Father. Then we will be one in purpose, will and spirit with God, filled with infinite light, creatures of light who find no allure in darkness. We will have no desire for sin.

In this world, God's presence remains concealed. We don't see God, and it takes faith to walk with Him; it takes a real effort to set aside our own will for the sake of His. In the World to Come, however, God's presence will be revealed. It won't take faith or effort to submit ourselves to Him.

In view of that future state of glory, it's easy to see why the choice to submit ourselves to God and obey His commandments has meaning only in this world. In the World to Come, every tongue will confess Him, and all creatures will serve Him, but in this world, the path of repentance and good deeds requires a leap of faith and sacrifice of the will. That's why repentance and choosing to do right is something that only has real meaning now.

That also explains why the repentance message is central to Jesus' gospel message. Jesus really had only one main sermon and teaching, and it's the same teaching He told His disciples to present: "Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). He told His disciples that He had been sent only to declare that message (Luke 4:43).

In a Jewish context, "repentance" does not mean to change your mind or even to feel badly about something you have done, but rather, it literally means, "to turn around." It's the same word Moses and the prophets used to describe what the nation of Israel must do to amend her relationship with God when she strayed from the commandments of the Torah.

In a Jewish religious context, "repentance" means only to quit

breaking God's commandments, turn around and start obeying them. Sin is transgression of Torah. Quit sinning, start doing good. That message is obvious when the Gospels are read from a Jewish perspective. The vast majority of Jesus' teachings and parables circle around the theme of repentance. For example, consider the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, the prodigal son, the sower and the seed, the rich man and Lazarus, and so forth—they are all parables about repentance.

Likewise, the apostle Paul called the Gentiles to repentance. He described his mission saying that he "declared first to those at Damascus, then at Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, do works proving their repentance" (Acts 26:20).

We can't afford to procrastinate with repentance. Do it now, while it still counts for something. Do it while it still counts for something greater than the whole life of the World to Come. {eoa}

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Rabbi Jonathan Cahn: This Is a Time of Testing

American Christians are watching gospel-preaching pastors endorse a presidential candidate that supports abortion and other antichrist agenda while our nation's future hangs in the balance.

"This is a time of testing ... our testing," says Rabbi Jonathan Cahn, author of the new best-seller *The Book of Mysteries*. "What did Messiah say? He said, 'You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.' Well, what happens if the salt loses its saltiness?"

Cahn is quoting from Matthew 5:13 and most Christians know the answer to the question. So where do we go from here with America declining into darkness?

Watch Cahn's recent appearance on *The Jim Bakker Show* to find a hopeful answer.

A Conservative's View of Donald Trump's Revised Supreme Court 'Short List'

On May 18, then-future Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump put out a list of 11 individuals, all sitting judges, who he would consider as a potential replacement for Antonin Scalia, who died unexpectedly last February, on the Supreme Court of the United States. Trump has now added 10 new names

to that list.

As was the case with his original list, the men and women who have been added appear to be eminently qualified to sit on the high court. Nine of these individuals (Mike Lee, Thomas Lee, Allison Eid, Raymond Kethledge, Joan Larsen, David Stras, Margaret Ryan, Neil Gorsuch, and Steven Colloton) clerked for Supreme Court justices, and several others held distinguished clerkships as well.

Many of them have taught or continue to teach at prestigious law schools. Mike Lee is a sitting U.S. senator, and Charles Canady served four terms in the House of Representatives. While several served as state or federal prosecutors, at least one (Federico Moreno) served as a federal public defender.

One thing that is particularly striking about the Trump list is the geographic diversity and non-federal judicial experience of many of the identified individuals. As Scalia noted in his dissenting opinion in the same-sex marriage case, the current composition of the Supreme Court hardly reflects “a cross-section of America.” He added:

[The] Court ... consists of only nine men and women, all of them successful lawyers who studied at Harvard or Yale Law School. Four of the nine are natives of New York City. Eight of them grew up in east- and west-coast States. Only one hails from the vast expanse in-between. Not a single Southwesterner or even, to tell the truth, a genuine Westerner (California does not count).

Nine of the people on the Trump list, on the other hand, are sitting state supreme court justices from eight different states across the country. Two of them (Diane Sykes and Moreno) sat as state court judges before becoming federal judges. Although not a state court judge, Ryan sits on the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, which would likely give her a different perspective from most other federal judges.

Individuals with experience on state courts are less likely to have a jaundiced view of the competency of state court judges, who are sometimes treated like the figurative poor step-child by the federal judiciary. They are also more likely to pay greater heed to issues involving federalism, which also tends to get short shrift by federal legislators and judges.

This is important, for, as Justice Anthony Kennedy stated for a unanimous court in *Bond v. United States*:

Federalism secures the freedom of the individual. It allows States to respond, through the enactment of positive law, to the initiative of those who seek a voice in shaping the destiny of their own times without having to rely solely upon the political processes that control a remote central power. ... [T]he individual liberty secured by federalism is not simply derivative of the rights of the States.

When it comes to interpreting statutes and the Constitution, a judge must keep uppermost in mind that he or she did not write the text and should not attempt to rewrite that text through creative “interpretation” to mean something quite different from what was intended by its drafters, but which he or she personally considers more fair, wise or just.

In other words, a judge should interpret the text and structure of a statute or the Constitution, based on the original public meaning of that text at the time it was adopted, and should not, under the guise of statutory or constitutional interpretation, impose on the rest of society his or her own policy predilections based on that judge’s perceptions of contemporary mores. The men and women whose names have been added to the list appear to adhere to this view.

As I wrote in an earlier commentary, which contained my own list of eight individuals (six of whom are on Trump’s list), it is not just the Scalia vacancy that needs to be taken into

consideration.

By the time the next president takes the oath of office on Jan. 20, 2017, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg will be 83 years old, Kennedy will be 80 years old, and Justice Stephen Breyer will be 78 years old. And while I wish them all continued good health, it is a fact that the average life expectancy in this country is 76.3 years for males and 81.3 years for females. Therefore, it is entirely possible that the next president will get to fill several vacancies on the court over the next four to eight years.

With lifetime appointments, all federal court judges, but most particularly Supreme Court justices, exert substantial influence on the development and application of the law over a long period, often for decades after the president who appointed them has left office.

As a colleague and I stated recently, few presidential elections have featured federal court judges among their top five issues. The Supreme Court's odious decision in the Dred Scott case was a central theme in the 1860 race between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. And several controversial decisions by the Warren Court were front and center in the 1968 face-off between Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey.

This may well be another such year. The next president will have the opportunity to leave a massive imprint on the federal courts for a generation or more. The stakes are high indeed.

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