

Dutch Sheets: America Will Choose Her Destiny With These 7 Ideals

America is in a fight for her destiny. Our upcoming presidential election is about more than which personality or political party we prefer. A well-known Christian author has written a well-circulated blog suggesting Christians shouldn't vote for Donald Trump. His reasons center around the poor witness and example of Christianity he believes Trump has demonstrated, and his fears that this might continue, should he be elected. (As you may know, Trump professes to be a Christian.)

Others, even major Republican leaders, have also refused to support Trump on the basis of "principle." Many good and sincere people are struggling to decide where they stand on this important decision. Though we cannot, as a non-profit ministry, endorse a candidate, I do have some thoughts that may help as you think and pray about your choice for president.

1) First, like the aforementioned Christian author, I passionately desire to have a God-honoring, Christian President; and obviously I, too, would prefer one that exemplifies Christian principles.

2) I have also been appalled by some of Trump's rude, mean-spirited, and even vicious attacks on others; I've also been disappointed at times by the pride I've seen in him.

3) I am as suspicious as anyone when the timing of a person's "conversion" to Christ occurs when it is conveniently needed, whether it be prior to an election or when going before a judge; and I, too, am always looking for the fruit such a conversion should begin to manifest.

4) I do not agree with all of Trump's positions.

But here's where I differ with some Christians: whether or not a person speaks kindly, would provide an appropriate Christian witness or, frankly, even professes to be a believer—though, again, this would always be my preference—are not my primary litmus tests for presidential candidates or important positions of national leadership. I'm glad General George Patton helped save the world during World War II, foul mouth and all.

Like all of us, I've known many individuals I would thoroughly trust in leadership or government who did not profess to be a Christian. And, on the other hand, I've known many professing Christians whom I would *never* trust to govern. (The names Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama come to mind.)

I fear that sometimes we Christians insert the same religious mindset into elections that has divided the church for centuries: If one's theologies and religious standards don't agree with ours, we refuse to walk or work together. It seems as though many Christians have the mistaken belief that partnering or working with someone means we agree with and support everything they believe. How absurd ... and how costly.

As an example, millions of Christians in the last presidential election refused to vote for Governor Romney because he was a Mormon. Their Christian principles, ideals and theology simply wouldn't permit it. And what did those well-meaning, "principled" decisions give us?

We Christians need to take another look at the principles we allow to guide us at the polls! We've "principled" ourselves into irrelevance and, ironically, a national loss of biblical principles. We must remember we are not electing a religious leader. And we will always be electing a flawed person to lead a flawed people. Unfortunately, the perfect candidate doesn't exist.

When voting, consider not just the candidate, but also the issues we face. Which candidate is going to make the decisions that are best for the whole nation? And whose policies more closely align with the Word of God? Here is my suggested list of the ideals we should allow to steer us when we vote (not including the obvious intangibles of intellect, wisdom, and such):

1) God-honoring. Does this person at least profess to believe in and honor God?

2) The sanctity of life. Where does this candidate stand on abortion?

3) The Supreme Court. What type of judges will this person appoint? At least two (and perhaps up to five!) Supreme Court Justices will be appointed by the next president, which will tip the balance of power *for decades*. Life, morality, family, religious freedom, the Constitution and our very destiny as a nation are at stake. Reining in a renegade Supreme Court is of the utmost urgency.

4) Family. Where does this individual stand on marriage and the family unit?

5) America's Judeo-Christian heritage. Does this candidate recognize, honor, and want to perpetuate this?

6) Our military. In light of the tenuous state of affairs around the world, would this individual build our military or cut it and make us weaker?

7) Limited government. Does this person believe government, higher taxes, and state-run programs are the solution to most problems, or do they believe government should always be the last resort and should be decreased in size?

It is absolutely critical—indeed, in my opinion it is a sacred responsibility—that all Christians vote in this election, and

that we vote for the person who most fulfills these qualifications. Remember that no one is perfect and that we are *not* endorsing everything about the person for whom we vote. But never again should we lose by default, giving further control of our nation to those with whom we disagree most and who stand in opposition to God.

Never. {eoa}

Dutch Sheets *is an internationally recognized author, teacher and conference speaker. He travels extensively, empowering believers for passionate prayer and societal transformation. Dutch has pastored, taught in several colleges and seminaries and served on the board of directors of numerous organizations. Dutch's greatest passion is to see America experience a sweeping revival and return to its godly heritage. Dutch is a messenger of hope for America, encouraging Believers to contend for awakening in our day and reformation in our lifetime. Dutch has written over 20 books, many of which have been translated into over 30 languages.*