

Enough with All the Rhetoric. Only God Can Save America

I've heard it from the left, and I've heard it from the right. "Vote our way and save the nation!"

Most recently, in the context of Senator Elizabeth Warren's announcement that she was roughly 1 percent Native American, it was Jim Messina, President Barack Obama's campaign manager in 2012 tweeting, "Argue the substance all you want, but why 22 days before a crucial election where we MUST win house and senate to save America, why did @SenWarren have to do her announcement now? Why can't Dems ever stay focused???"

Yes, the Democrats must win the House and Senate "to save America." If the Republicans hold their majorities, it is all over for our nation.

There's even a "Vote Against Trump. Save America" T-shirt for sale on Amazon. And there's a website called (it warns against Republican tactics).

As an Aug. 30th headline on the (liberal-leaning) Daily Beast proclaimed, "Citizens of Good Will, You Must Help Save America in These Midterm Elections."

On the flip side, many conservative leaders have emphasized the critical nature of these midterm elections, stating that we need to vote red to save the nation. (I wish I had kept copies of the e-blasts I have received with this basic message: "The fate of America is at stake! Vote Republican and save the nation!")

Granted, the 2018 midterms are very important, and I'm strongly encouraging folks to get out and vote for conservative principles.

But the elections will not determine the destiny of America. Only God can do that. Only God can save our nation.

And ultimately, transformation will come to America from the bottom up more than from the top down. Put another way, the political scene reflects the mood of the people more than it determines the mood of the people.

When Trump was elected, I saw comments from educated people saying, "Donald Trump is the Antichrist!"

Not long before that, others were proclaiming, "Barack Obama is the Antichrist!"

And just today, I received an email asking, "Is Mark Zuckerberg the Antichrist?"

Can we let up a little with this rhetoric? Can we adapt a more realistic tone?

You could argue that the media is far more influential than politics.

You could argue that our schools are far more influential than politics.

And I would certainly argue that the life of the church is far more influential than politics.

After all, it is "we the people" who make the decisions about the direction of our nation. And if the church did its job to reflect God's light and make disciples, America would be transformed. In turn, politics would be transformed. The courts would be transformed. The schools would be transformed. Even the media would be transformed.

Again, this is not to downplay the significance of the 2018 midterms or the 2020 presidential elections. (Can you imagine how intense things will be in 2020? Can you imagine how crazy the news cycles will be and how pitched the emotional

battles?)

I totally recognize the momentous decisions that could be made in the next two years. I understand what could happen with a blue wave or a red wave.

It's easy to list the consequences either way: the courts, from the Supreme Court down; the economy; national security; international relations; immigration; and on and on it goes. These are massively important issues, issues that affect us and our children and our grandchildren and beyond.

But let's face the facts. The main reason the Supreme Court redefined marriage is because of massive cultural shifts. The main reason we still have abortion on demand is because of spiritual complacency and moral stupor.

And the only reason the mainstream news media is so far left and many universities are so far left and so much of Hollywood is so far left is because the larger culture has allowed it or encouraged it. Without that cultural market, these institutions would either dry up and die or make dramatic changes. The clientele simply would not be there.

Personally, I plan to vote conservative next month, and I hope millions of evangelicals will do the same. But we could have a massive red wave, and we will not be one inch closer to national revival and renewal. Conversely, we could have a massive blue wave, and it could drive Christian conservatives to pray, producing more lasting fruit than all the votes in the world.

The bottom line—to repeat one of my mantras—is that politics is not the gospel. Political decisions are very important in the life of the nation, and our votes do make a difference in determining many aspects of our national direction.

But politics, in itself, is not transformational. Rather, in a democratic republic like ours, politics carries out the will

of the people whose votes prevail.

So, while we should vote and stay involved politically, let's not take our eyes off the prize, which is the transformation of our nation. That is the work of God, and He recruits us to be His fellow workers, one life at a time.