

Pro-Trump and No-Trump Christians: Can They Unite in 2020?

Like many, I'm perplexed by the divide in the Christian community over President Trump. This article has been many months in the making as I've talked to people on both sides of the aisle. And as I stated in a brief op-ed, we can't have our cake and eat it too—there is no middle ground for Christians today. You can either choose a president who will wear a Planned Parenthood scarf at her inauguration (or one of countless others who would seek to destroy the America we know and lead us down the primrose path of socialism—or worse), or you can back President Trump. There is no plan B. I'm amazed at how many pulpits are silent on this (more here and at my website, including Fox News debates).

The following seven points may help us better understand the differences between pro-Trump and no-Trump Christians. Personally, I believe that No. 7 stands above them all.

1. Some believe that Christians should stay out of politics. That may sound noble and even spiritual, but politics has been instrumental in movements to protect the unborn and the poor, to abolish slavery and secure women's rights, and to advance the Civil Rights movement, to mention only a few.

Politics won't save America, but in order to implement change and help others, we must take action; hence, the political process. Politics, which once focused largely on the economy, national security and the deficit, now tackle important moral issues. These major issues have enormous implications; to remain silent actually makes a statement that we are not concerned enough. Topics considered "too controversial" are often critically important; we can no longer ignore them.

2. Many are divided over foundational issues and the role of government. Some value appearance over abortion and graceful speech over national security. They are concerned that Trump is reckless but fail to see the plethora of conservative judges he has appointed and the protection of freedom of speech. Some even say, "Bring on the persecution. The early church did!" No, that's not correct. The early church did not invite persecution, and most Christians in persecuted countries wish that they had our freedom. Many need to wake up to this fact. We can't be united if we are divided on foundational issues. If everything is a priority, then nothing is. The highest priority is the value of human life. There is no contender. Our president is not a pastor; he is to be a terror to those who do evil (Rom. 13:3-4). This is why it's unwise to apply many of Jesus' teachings such as "turn the other cheek" to the institution of government. Contextually, Jesus was referring to personal affronts and insults, not to the administration of justice—which leads to the next point.

3. Many misquote Scripture to push their agenda. I've been shocked at how many people use "turn the other cheek" and other scriptures out of context. If you feel that the government should "turn the other cheek," I appreciate your heart, but you really need to think this through. Even Jesus didn't always turn the other cheek. When one of the temple officers struck Him, he called the man out and said, "Why do you strike me?" There is a time to call people out. The Bible does not promote pacifism in all cases, especially in the context of national security. Should we tell our leaders to turn the other cheek to Russia, China and North Korea?

I would love to have a humble, Spirit-filled Christian in office, but this person would have to be an exceptional leader who not only shows grace to his fellow man but is also a terror to terrorists. And even if that person exists, I am not sure if they could win the presidency. There are only two candidates ... two choices when it comes to enough votes to win.

Again, the president is to protect and defend, not turn the other cheek. I believe that this is also why many of us view Trump's tweets differently. For example, on immigration, although I would not have said what he said, what I read into many of the tweets is that he was talking about securing our borders from those who wish to do us harm. He was not making a blanket statement that applies to all immigrants. We have a legal process to enter our country, and if we want to change it, there is a constitutional method to do so. As Christians, we should be able to agree about the rule of law, even if we don't care for the words used to express how those laws should be enforced. So, on the one hand, I can have great compassion for refugees and others who want to live here, but on the other hand, I realize that we have to do things the right way.

How I treat refugees is different from how the government does. I do not believe in the separation of church and state as it is defined today. But I do believe the church and state are to be separate in their duties and functions while being interwoven in their core beliefs and principles. Our second president, John Adams, said: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." (More can be found in my book, *One Nation Above God*, free on Kindle.)

4. Many are looking through the lens of color or race. Instead of looking through the lens of a biblical worldview, many vote based on ethnicity. Sadly, the lie that Donald Trump is a racist has driven fear-based voting. Somehow (in ways still unclear to me), white Christians are viewed as Republican racists, when in reality, it was the Republicans who fought against slavery and championed freedom. I just finished reading Ulysses S. Grant's biography, and it's amazing to learn about the true cost of freedom. The tens of thousands who gave their lives in the Civil War would be horrified to see how the truth has been twisted today. Unfortunately, racism is still alive, but it's found on both sides of the

political aisle. Neither party should be characterized as racist.

5. Many believe that whatever good President Trump has done for the church, he has done more damage in the long run. The argument goes something like this: "Because evangelicals are so closely associated with Trump, it makes the gospel look bad." They would add, "We have always been the 'character counts' people. What has changed?" Nothing has changed. We are not voting for people based on a Christ-like character (though that would be a huge plus); we are voting for the future direction of America. And how do we know that President Trump is not slowly changing for the better being around so many godly influences—from James Robison to Jentezen Franklin to Franklin Graham to Robert Morris? I think that those Christian leaders closest to him would be the ones to best assess the spiritual climate of the White House rather than arm-chair quarterbacks.

My concern for the group under this point is that they worry too much about his personal character. Yes, character counts, but President Trump doesn't set the spiritual climate of our nation, we do. God doesn't let a spiritual awakening hinge on the character of one person. America's first Great Awakening happened under the difficult reign of the king of England. Granted, he wasn't elected by the people, but the principle still stands: Let God deal with President Trump, and let us be concerned about personal revival and renewal. God's call of repentance is not to Hollywood, Washington or the media (though that would be great to see); His call is to us. "If My people ... turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chr. 7:14). The silent majority needs to wake from their spiritual slumber.

Here is an analogy that will bring this point home. The head of a neighborhood watch program, who took the late-night watches, had previously had an affair. He was occasionally

gruff and impulsive, and sometimes his words were crass and offensive, but he watched over the neighborhood diligently each night. Each week he invited church leaders into his home to pray for him and his family and to seek their advice. He often stood against others on the committee who wanted to enact policies harmful to the neighborhood and to the children, such as advocating an open-door policy where residents were required to allow anyone into their homes at all hours of the day for handouts.

Is this not the kind of person you would want leading your neighborhood watch? Does his past or demeanor matter more than the results he is seeking? If you are intellectually honest, the answer is not difficult. In the same way, the answer is simple for America. Again, we are not voting for people based on how godly they are; we are voting for the future direction of America: the right to life, the elevation of God's Word back to its proper place, the appointment of conservative judges, securing America and her borders, creating jobs and improving the quality of life for all Americans.

6. Some feel that many pro-Trumpers place patriotism before the kingdom of God. But is being a proud American wrong? Not necessarily. Yes, for some pro-Trumpers, "MAGA" seems to be more important than the Great Commission. It is wrong to put man's kingdom before God's kingdom. But we have dual citizenship. We have a responsibility to both, with God's kingdom as the priority. We cannot overlook our civic responsibility as Christians—we can no longer hide behind the excuse, "I don't want to get involved." As citizens, we have the privilege (for now) to place people in positions of leadership. God blessed us with this privilege. 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.

While nationalism can include a self-righteous attitude, it doesn't have to—it's all about how we define it and how we live. Watch my short clip on nationalism [here](#) and my clip titled "What You Must Know About America" [here](#).

7. Christians are divided because many who claim to be "Christians" are not genuinely saved. As a result, their perception of truth is skewed. Having interacted with people about President Trump since 2016, I have noticed that many no-Trumpers shared pro-LGBTQ statements and rainbow flags on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Most of them also had a low view of Scripture and avoided words such as repentance, holiness and sin, but they willingly flaunted their favorite R-rated sexually charged movie and saw no problem with sharing profanity-laced memes and "jokes." This was very telling. Many are led by Hollywood, not the Holy Spirit. If Hollywood and the national media are on your side, there's a problem.

In short, although there are some, it was hard to find God-fearing Christians on social media and throughout the USA who love God's Word and spend time in prayer with humility and repentance who also oppose President Trump. Coincidence? I think not. Kingdoms are colliding, and there is a definite bias. As Ryan Bomberger said so well in his op-ed, "Where was the call for removal of President Barack Obama? For the first time in history, an American President keynoted a fundraising gala for the leading killer of those made in God's image—Planned Parenthood."

Bomberger continues, "He was the most radically pro-abortion president in history," and adds that Obama once said, "God Bless Planned Parenthood!" Back then, the media lauded him at every turn, and any who opposed Obama were labeled as racist, fundamentalist Christians, bitterly clinging to their God and their guns. Can't I like Obama and Michelle as people, but not agree with their policies without being labeled? The answer is no. Today, that same media attacks the president on every issue, and anyone who supports him is regarded as ignorant,

uneducated and unworthy of even being allowed to speak publicly.

In closing, I agree with what Dr. Michael Brown said in his op-ed regarding evangelical elites versus evangelical deplorables and how to improve the communication. That's what I'm hoping to accomplish. After all, we are either building a strong nation for our children and grandchildren, or we are destroying it from the inside out. The choice is ours.

So the question we should really be asking is: In what direction will those running for office take us? In the upcoming election, we will be presented with one of two choices. So, yes, I believe that most Christians can be united if we commit this truth to memory before November 2020: There is no plan B.