

Results Are God's

"Duty is ours; results are God's." – John Quincy Adams

The sad reality is that all too often our young people aren't taught the richness of American history. Instead, they're told about a few red-letter dates, some generalities—usually tainted with liberal bias—and then what to think about it all.

Christians who are intent on convincing their brothers and sisters they have a duty to vote—and to vote a certain way—often recite the quote above. And while that much is true, there is so much more behind that quote that *all* Americans should know.

John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, took a couple years off after his term in office, and then was elected to Congress. He served in the House of Representatives for another 17 years, until his death on Feb. 23, 1848.

It was the latter days of the Antebellum Period of American History, when northern abolitionists—like Adams—were intent on ending the practice forever. And, for the first few years he served in the House, the former president presented a petition to Congress demanding the abolition of slavery.

But as the momentum behind the abolitionist movement, propelled by the Second Great Awakening, began to grow, the pro-slavery members of Congress took extraordinary measures. Beginning in 1837, they adopted "gag rules," which prohibited the subject of slavery from being discussed in the chamber.

Eventually, in 1840, the gag rules were codified into the actual Rules of the House, even though Adams correctly argued it was a violation of the First Amendment's petition clause. And yet, he still managed to find a way to circumvent the rule by using his superior oratory skills to bait his colleagues.

And over the years, he worked to build a coalition to repeal the rule. It took time, more than four years, but eventually, he was able to have the rule erased, although he would never live to see slavery ended.

Asked why he kept up his “quixotic” fight over the gag rules and the institution of slavery, he uttered his famous phrase: “Duty is ours; results are God’s.”

Adams was a man of unwavering Christian faith. He had no idea if he could win the debate, but his faith informed him that it was a debate that couldn’t be ignored. So, he never gave up.

“[Y]ou should form and adopt certain rules or principles, for the government of your own conduct and temper,” he once said. “It is in the Bible. You must learn them, and from the Bible how to practice them. Those duties are to God, to your fellow-creatures, and to yourself.

“‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.’”

We aren’t loving our brothers and sisters, much less our neighbors, of late. I’ve followed politics for more than 30 years, and I have to say this is the worst I’ve ever seen it—and it’s nowhere near contained to any one particular candidate’s supporters.

It’s everywhere I look.

I listened to Donald Trump speak for the first time as a then-potential presidential candidate at the Iowa Freedom Summit in January of last year. At the time, I remarked to a group of friends:

“He’s tapping into a place no career politician would ever dare go, but if he is successful in articulating a message of strength, he will be a force to be reckoned with. When—not

if—he decides to run, anyone who doesn't take his candidacy seriously will have made a huge tactical error.”

I think the Republican Party establishment seriously misjudged how deeply the party's base feels betrayed by its failure to advocate on their behalf. I also think several of the non-establishment candidates entered the race with a flawed set of assumptions about evangelical voters.

As a result, frustration, fear and anger have all taken over.

I'm not advocating for any particular candidate, but if you have not yet voted in the presidential primaries, I would encourage you to do so prayerfully. If you feel God is calling you to vote for a particular candidate, that is who you should vote for, regardless of what the polls or the media say.

But once we've voted, we need to remember that it's no longer up to us to decide what will happen. Everything that follows will do so according to God's will. So it's time for all of us to prayerfully consider that our hopes for the 2016 election may not align with God's plan.

And that's OK, because He's still in charge.

Just don't use it as an excuse to unleash your frustrations out on your brothers and sisters, or even your neighbors, who may not have agreed with your opinions—or perhaps felt called to act in a different manner. We're all called to be better than that.

Regardless, all of us are coming to a day of hard decision. What we should all be doing now is praying God equips us not only for that decision, but also for what will follow.