

Seven Tips for Christians Who Want to Caucus in Iowa

If you're an Iowa Christian who has never caucused before, here are some quick pieces of advice to consider.

1. Be Prepared to Step Up

Most of the campaigns already have "precinct captains" who have volunteered to speak about their candidates on Caucus Night. Even the most well organized campaigns don't have captains for every precinct, though.

If you've decided on a candidate, you should be able to discuss that decision with others, to help convince others that they should agree with you. Have something ready to read, something three minutes or less, to take with you to your precinct.

2. Vote Your Conscience

Just because it may appear you're the only person supporting a particular candidate in your precinct doesn't mean you should suddenly abandon that vote for a candidate who is more popular. The voting is secret, for one thing, and the only tally that really matters is the final count at party headquarters in Des Moines.

3. Don't Just Vote and Bolt

The majority of caucus voters will be "vote and bolters," those who stick around just long enough to vote for the presidential candidate of their choice, and then go back home. The caucus is much more important than just that single act. That is where the process for formulating the party's platform begins, and Christians need to have their fingerprints all over that process.

4. Know the Platform

The Republican Party of Iowa has made its platform available in a digital format, which is helpful with today's smartphone technology. But, it's a huge document, so it's helpful to at least know where to look when you need to make a quick reference. In reading it, you might be surprised to learn some of the positions that party currently holds on issues that matter to Christians.

5. Be Prepared to Volunteer

There are many opportunities to volunteer your time and services in support of the local party, not just as a party official. Sometimes, they just need people willing to walk in parades, or to call voters as part of the get-out-the-vote effort. This helps get other like-minded individuals elected, which should be the goal of every Christian.

6. Be Prepared to Witness

Caucus is a very social experience. In most cases, you're going to be crammed in with dozens of people you may not know, and who may not know the Good News. There's nothing inappropriate about using that as an opportunity to reach out and share Christ's love with others.

7. Pray

This is, by far, the most important suggestion one Christian can ever give another. There can be no discernment without prayer. But don't just pray for yourself, pray for everyone who will be involved. Pray for those who are required to travel, and pray for those who seek understanding once the final votes are cast. Finally, pray that Caucus 2016 can be an opportunity for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.