

Should We Put Up Political Signs in Our Yards?

Read Time: 5 Minutes 26 Seconds

At a recent Q&A session, a Christian leader asked me an interesting question. She and her husband live in a community of about 50 families, most of whom are Democrats.

This woman and her husband are widely known in their community as committed Christians, openly celebrating Christian holidays and putting up a Christmas display every year. Recently, they were asked to put up signs in their yard supporting two Republican candidates, people also known for their Christian values. Should they do it?

I'll share my answer in a moment, but let's think through the issues a bit more fully.

I asked this on Twitter and Facebook: "If you're known to your friends, neighbors and colleagues as a follower of Jesus, should you put up signs in your yard for political candidates or wear a candidate's hat? Yes (because our politics reflects our faith)? No (because this would muddle our gospel witness)? What's your take?"

The responses on both of those platforms were fairly evenly divided, signifying that there's plenty of room for debate.

One woman commented, "Yes absolutely. We must stand up for what's right. Pro-life."

In contrast, another woman posted, "No. Politicians aren't known to have the best morals or character. I don't want to be judged by another's flaws."

One man said, "Yes! You're to witness through your political views, and show that they line up with the biblical values,

morals, ethics and principles you claim to live by. You can't sing 'Jesus Loves The Little Children' in church on Sunday while posting a sign for a pro-abortion candidate on your front lawn Monday through Saturday and voting for legal abortion on election day!"

Another man commented, "Absolutely not. I only want to be known as a follower of Jesus."

What's your take?

In order to respond properly to this Christian leader, I asked her how the placards might prove helpful. Would they possibly get some of those in the neighborhood to vote for these candidates? Would it spark any useful conversations? Or, to the contrary, would it make it harder for this couple to share their faith, since the gospel would now be associated with political candidates?

My own view was that if they really felt the signs would be helpful to the candidates and would also lead to some fruitful, honest discussion with their neighbors, it might be fine. But my greater concern would be whether it would tarnish their witness, since they would not just be known for their faith in Jesus but for their open support for these particular candidates.

Of course, I encouraged them to give the matter prayerful consideration, confident that as mature believers, they would make the right decision.

But there *are* certain principles I consider plain and self-evident, and it's important to always keep these in mind.

First, as far it lies with us, we should be much better known for our devotion to Jesus than for how we vote.

We want to shout to the world that Jesus is our Savior and Lord and that we owe Him our all.

We can quietly explain how we vote and for whom.

Let there be no mistake in anyone's mind about the difference in emphasis between our salvation and our vote.

If I was posting this graphically, I would use massive bold letters to proclaim: JESUS DIED FOR MY SINS AND I GIVE HIM MY HEART AND SOUL, MY LIFE, MY WILL, MY ALL.

Then, in tiny letters, I would post: "this candidate gets my vote."

So, however loudly we announce our political beliefs to our friends and colleagues and neighbors, let's be sure that our gospel witness is announced even more loudly and clearly. Let's also be sure there is no contradiction between the two.

Second, it's one thing to be identified with a political cause, such as being pro-life or pro-family or pro-justice. It's another thing to be identified with a political party or candidate.

That's because the pro-life cause is a righteous cause, plain and simple. We are fighting for the lives of the unborn.

It's the same with being pro-family or pro-justice.

We are advocating for God's plan for marriage. We are standing against injustice.

Those are righteous things to do, even if people hate us for it. So be it. These righteous causes are part and parcel of our larger gospel witness. We follow Jesus, and we hold to biblical values.

It's another matter entirely when it comes to identifying with a political candidate or party, since both are often flawed, and part of a rough and tough system that is often dirty.

Politicians often fudge the truth to get elected (to put it

mildly). They use ugly attack ads that demonize their opponents. The parties themselves deal with internal power plays, greed and cronyism. They are part of an earthly system that is often anything but “Christian” in its operation.

So, if I’m known for being pro-life, I can defend that position without hesitation, Bible in hand. If I’m known for being pro-candidate X, I might have to apologize for things he or she says or does.

The pro-life position we hold to is always defensible. The candidate or party we support is not.

That doesn’t mean that we don’t vote. That’s like saying we shouldn’t sleep, because our sleep is often flawed and imperfect. Or that we shouldn’t marry, since many marriages have problems.

Voting has its place, and the implications of these midterm elections, let alone the 2024 elections, are quite massive. Let us be informed, and let us vote.

And it’s fine to support a candidate or be known as the member of a party (if the candidate and party are not anti-God and anti-Bible).

But, to repeat, our support for an imperfect candidate can never be as unwavering as our support for a righteous cause. And, more importantly, our vocal support for a candidate can never compete with our vocal support for the Lord.

Be determined to live in such a way as to be sure that no one can mistake where you stand.

As for putting up signs in the neighborhood, how would you have answered the question?

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