

3 Ways to Exercise Your Spiritual Authority in the 2020 Election

God gave authority to mankind to rule over all that is in the earth. In Genesis 1:26-28, God declared that He created the human race to “rule” or “have dominion”—this is often referred to as the “dominion mandate.” In other words, as image bearers, made in God’s likeness, mankind’s call to rule is one of our primary job descriptions. Under the Lord’s leadership, the body of Christ is to exercise our authority in Christ through prayer and good works—this includes the civic act of voting. Prayer is more than personal piety, good works are more than personal kindness, and voting is more than a personal political preference; each is a manifestation of our rulership under Jesus’ headship.

Act 1: Prayer

“Therefore I exhort first of all that you make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings for everyone, for kings and for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

Paul exhorted us to make it a priority to pray for all who are in authority, thus we are called to pray for presidents, senators, governors, mayors, police commissioners and everyone in between. Our prayers can affect the decisions a leader makes; those decisions influence our lifestyle, families and economies. One result of praying for those in authority is “that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness.” The spiritual atmospheres of a city or nation can shift so that there is a peaceful social environment in which the body of Christ can more effectively mobilize to bring the gospel to

others.

There are demonic assignments focused on deceiving and harassing governmental leaders. Satan, recognizing a leader's position, attacks the leader's mind and heart with "fiery darts" (NKJV) or "flaming arrows" (NIV), or demonically energized oppression, anger, agitation, fear, lust or bitterness (Eph. 6:12-18).

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places ... above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one ... praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:12, 16-18, NKJV).

God's people are the only people with the spiritual means to use Jesus' authority—as they pray.

There are demonic principalities and powers over each city and nation. There is an organized demonic kingdom that actively opposes God's purposes in an unseen realm called "the heavenly places." When believers pray, essentially by agreeing with God and disagreeing with the enemy, we participate in spiritual warfare prayers that wrestle demonic principalities. We proclaim God's will and victory in prayer, the supremacy of Jesus and His power, and promises in Scripture over our city or nation.

As a result of our prayers, the Spirit is empowered to release more supernatural activity, including ministering angels who drive back demons and usher in peace that can affect presidential cabinet meetings, city halls and many such places. We pray that the Holy Spirit inspires political leaders to give right decrees that serve God's purpose. The

heart of a political leader is in the hand of the Lord. The Lord can turn it like channels of water.

“The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turns it to any place He will” (Prov. 21:1, MEV).

A leader has a free will, but if he has a peaceable mindset—even though he is an unbeliever—then his decisions will be different from those he may make when he is angry, fearful, jealous, bitter or oppressed. The leader still makes his own decisions, but under a very different influence, according to the angel or the demon who may be “putting his hand on their chest,” so to speak.

The body of Christ must not neglect its privileged position in the heavenlies to affect world governments. Believers in agreement with Jesus’ leadership make up the highest ruling body in the universe.

The prophet Daniel’s prayers represent a prototype of petitions that shift earthly governments. Three times a day, Daniel set his heart to pray while in exile in a pagan land, Persia (Dan. 6:10). As a result of Daniel’s commitment to pray and fast, the nation of Israel was set free from bondage and released into God’s will and promise to return to Jerusalem. One example from his life that intercessors commonly refer to is found in Daniel 10. It describes a time when he had prayed and fasted for 21 days, and an angel appeared and spoke to him, allowing us to glimpse behind the veil into the spiritual ripple effect of one man’s intercession.

“From the first day that you set your heart to ... humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days. So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me” (Dan. 10:12b-13a).

This passage allows us to see how our prayers affect angels and demonic powers and principalities. Additionally, the

reader understands that the intense conflict between high-ranking angels and demons is manifest in earthly spheres of government, which exist over each city and region of the world. Daniel's prayers got the angel through. Like Daniel, we can, in prayer, operate in the higher government of the spirit realm by exercising our authority in Christ to release angelic activity to bind demonic attacks, assignments and ideologies.

By seeing the power of prayer to affect governments, we can better understand Mary, Queen of Scots, who said, "I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the assembled armies of Europe."

Act 2: Good Works

A.J. Gordon once said, "You can do more than pray after you have prayed; but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed."

"Will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night? ... I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly (Luke 18:7-8a, NASB).

Jesus knew our works of justice would be far more effective when combined with night-and-day prayer that addresses the spiritual roots of injustice. Faith-based prayer and works are both necessary. When we serve the needy, the poor, the fatherless and the oppressed, we exalt Jesus by "doing justly" (see Mic. 6:8), a visible measurement of our invisible love for God.

Esther, Mordecai, Nehemiah, Daniel and others are biblical examples of God establishing people inside of wicked governments for the express purpose of influencing that government toward righteousness and justice for the oppressed. Prayer was vital indeed, but insufficient. In addition to praying and fasting, each cried out for justice.

The clearest instruction concerning the relationship of prayer

to justice is found in Isaiah 58, which depicts practical ways of doing works of justice with a spirit of mercy and humility. The Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, says in verses 6-7 (NIV): "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

We must see the dignity of individuals who are being oppressed physically and spiritually, their worth in God's sight, so we may serve them well and demonstrate how God actively loves them. Consistent prayer will result in an increase of the measure of God's power released through our works of justice. People not only need practical help, but they need to experience God's power too. Though social injustice will not be eradicated from the world until Jesus returns, we can make a difference today when we combine prayer with works of justice.

Act 3: Voting

In the American model of government, the people lead the nation. Those we appoint with our vote are our ambassadors. Voting for presidents, congressional leaders, senators, governors and mayors is how we contend for righteous rule in our land, by virtue of a righteous representative and righteous legislation. Our government is a servant and embodiment of the will of the people; our moral and sober responsibility to vote within the legal provisions of our government is a prophetic and intercessory act in a constitutional republic.

Voting is not a light political choice based on some warm feeling about a candidate. Voting is a prophetic witness to a higher king and a higher law and an act of governmental rulership before the Lord. Our main objective in the political

realm is not to get someone elected, but to be a faithful witness to Christ and His kingdom.

I urge people to vote biblical values without promoting either the Republican or Democratic parties. We are citizens of heaven engaging in a spiritual showdown that parallels Elijah and Jezebel. During Israel's darkest hours and greatest moral decline, God raised up intercessors and prophetic voices, instrumental in stemming the tide of apostasy. Believers today similarly confront the status quo with a burning zeal for the name and fame of God. We are a sign that God had not given up on the nation in its apostasy and moral decline.

We are called to be actively engaged in our cities and in the political process. Jesus said in Mark 12:17b (MEV), "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." In our republic, "Caesar" is made up of its citizens. We "render to Caesar" and exercise the dominion mandate given to Adam in Genesis 1 by praying for Caesar and its citizens, doing good works toward Caesar and its citizens and, as the true rulers of the U.S. government, voting in the upcoming 2020 elections.

In seeking to be salt and light in our culture, I so appreciate the stand that Charisma Media has taken in calling people to engage in the kingdom responsibility of voting biblical values. Why would a magazine, devoted for 45 years to inspiring people to encounter the power of the Spirit, address political issues? The Left has hijacked the term "political" so many things that are, in fact, spiritual principles, such as life and marriage, are considered "politics" and off limits to Christians.

For decades, we've been shunned from the public square and told to keep our religion and our piety within the four walls of the church. I am grateful that at "such a time as this," Charisma Media is calling many to take a bold and public stand for the Word of God—while backing it up with good works that include acts of intercession expressed both in prayer and in

taking time to vote biblical values and more.

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