

What Would God Say About Last Night's Debate

There's much debate this morning over the results of last night's presidential debate. Since undecided voters will likely decide the race, today's *Wall Street Journal* is focusing especially on their response. And *CNN* is fact-checking the debate and discussing its implications for the race.

My question is different: How does God view the debate and what it says about America? I think He would respond in at least two ways.

One: He is grieved by the divisiveness of our culture.

Today's *New York Times* actually understates the tone of the event: "Trump and Clinton Press Pointed Attacks in Debate." From the email scandal to the birther issue, the candidates spent a great deal of time attacking each other. In this sense, they represented the nation they hope to lead.

Lee Drutman noted in a recent *New York Times* article: "Rather than being one two-party nation, we are becoming two one-party nations." Drutman explains: Most large cities, college towns, the Northeast and the West Coast are what he calls "deep-blue Democratic." The South, the Great Plains, the Mountain States and suburban and rural areas in between are "ruby-red Republican strongholds."

Neither "nation" is changing anytime soon.

"Confirmation bias" has been defined as "a tendency to search for or interpret information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions." We do this when we read and listen only to news sources with which we agree. Or when we watch a debate hoping our candidate will win rather than seeking to learn how

each candidate would govern.

By contrast, God calls us to “be all of one mind, be loving toward one another, be gracious, and be kind” (1 Pet. 3:8, MEV). How much were these traits on display last night?

The Spirit wants to draw us to the Father that we might find unity in community with our Savior. As you discuss last night’s debate and the ongoing campaign, will you be a force for division or a voice for Jesus? For more on ways we can respond to the divisiveness of our culture, please see my latest website article, *Why Are We So Divided?*

Two: He wants us to serve His children.

I think God cares less who won the debate than He cares who is winning and losing in America. He grieves that 43.1 million people in our country woke up in poverty this morning and that 42.2 million Americans live without access to sufficient food, including 13.1 million children. More than half a million of us are homeless. We are in the grip of “the worst drug addiction epidemic in United States history,” according to one expert. Seventy-seven percent of Americans view pornography at least once a month.

How should we respond to these critical problems? By following God’s call to serve those who need our help. Jesus taught us that whatever we do to “the least of these brothers of Mine,” we do to Him (Matt. 25:40).

The divisiveness and challenges of our culture will persist long after last night’s debate is forgotten. So will our opportunity to speak the truth in love and care for God’s children. What our nation needs most can be found only in Christ.

C. S. Lewis was right: “God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.”

Note: For more on the debate, listen to Nick Pitts on WBAP at 7:15 a.m. and Point of View with Kerby Anderson at 1:00 p.m.