

Why Christians Need to Get Involved: Delegate Math & Rule 40

There's more that goes into the eventual Republican Party presidential nomination than simply accumulating delegates, and it's a big reason why Christians need to get more involved in the process.

In 2012, fearing a "floor fight" from supporters of then-U.S. Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), the Republican National Committee changed the rules for making a candidate eligible for the party's presidential nomination. Previously, a candidate needed to win a plurality of delegates from at least five states.

Now, to be eligible for the GOP presidential nomination, one must win a *majority* of delegates from at least *eight* states. This falls under what is sometimes referred to as "Rule 40," and it could create a major headache for the party before the national convention in August.

As of this moment, no candidate has won a majority of delegates in any state. Iowa and New Hampshire's delegates were distributed proportionately based on the popular votes. South Carolina, which votes a week from Saturday, will be the first winner-take-all state (some candidates are winner-take-all statewide, the rest are winner-take-all by congressional district).

Based on the current "delegate math," here is how the remaining GOP presidential candidates stand:

Donald Trump, 17 delegates

Ted Cruz, 11 delegates

Marco Rubio, 10 delegates

John Kasich, 5 delegates

Jeb Bush, 4 delegates

Ben Carson, 3 delegates

In addition to the eight “state wins,” the eventual nominee needs to have won at least 1,237 delegate votes at the national convention. Most of the states award their delegates proportionately, which means a candidate must win a majority of the votes to get a state win under Rule 40.

The biggest swing vote, the largest voting bloc, in the Republican Party is the evangelical Christian vote. They alone have the ability to pick the nominee outright before the national convention.

A few states select delegates indirectly and independently from the primary or caucus voting process. In those states, it’s important for Christians to ensure their votes are being recognized at the national level when it’s time to pick the Republican presidential nominee.

Committed Christians, if they want the Republican Party to reflect their principles, must also volunteer their time to serve as delegates themselves. Delegates don’t just vote for the eventual nominee, they also vote for the final national party platform.

Those who aren’t selected to go to the national convention can also participate in the platform process at the state level. This is vital for having a document by which Republican politicians’ feet can be held to the fire.

To do that, though, they must participate in the process.