

Why Christians Should Pay Attention to What Happens in Iowa

In six days, Iowans are about to sit down for the first-in-the-nation Iowa Caucuses.

It's an important duty many of the state's grass-roots activists take very seriously. Political observers often use the euphemism of "courtship" when it comes to the manner in which Iowa voters vet the candidates.

Frankly, it's very appropriate.

If you're an Iowan and your presidential endorsement isn't something as deeply personal as choosing a spouse, you're doing it wrong. And despite the "lamestream" media narrative that suggests otherwise, Iowa Republicans are pretty good at separating the wheat from the chaff.

But it wasn't always that way. Iowa has only been first in the nominating process within most voters' lifetimes.

In 1972, due to a scheduling conflict, the Iowa Democratic Caucus, traditionally held in early spring, was moved up to a February date, making it the first to decide who would eventually face then-President Richard Nixon. After some discussions with the Democrats, the Republicans followed suit in 1976.

Detractors of the first-in-the-nation status Iowa holds today say, "Iowa only picks corn." But if you look beyond simply who won—and I'm not just talking about Mike Huckabee in 2008 or Rick Santorum in 2012—you'll see that Iowa Republicans give Christians across the nation the information they need to coalesce behind a solid candidate.

For instance, in that very first Iowa Republican Caucus in 1976, Ronald Reagan came two points short against Gerald Ford. A brokered convention was avoided at the last minute, but can you imagine what might have been if the rest of the country's Christians had heeded Iowa's advice?

Iowa Republicans provide the nation's committed Christians a very detailed analysis of the field because we get a level of access to the candidates that most out-of-staters cannot fathom. It's with this access that we scrutinize every candidate down to the subatomic level.

Committed Christians make up at least half the voters at the Iowa Republican Caucus during the quadrennial presidential nomination process (caucuses are held every two years as part of the leadership selection and platform formulation process). They could be an even more dominant force this year with a large crop of openly Christian candidates who have done a good job of energizing Iowa Christians to turn out the vote.

Unfortunately, the lamestream media would like you to believe its folly. Here's how *Newsweek* recently decided to describe the situation:

"Since 1980, Iowa Republicans have accurately predicted the GOP nominee only twice: Bob Dole in 1996 and George W. Bush in 2000. In every other caucus, Iowa Republicans chose candidates that flopped outside Iowa.

"Why are Iowa Republicans so far out of step with the rest of the country?

"The answer is that Iowa Republicans are much more culturally conservative than the national average. Iowa GOP voters have consistently chosen polarizing, socially conservative presidential candidates over more electable establishment candidates."

Rather than look at how "out of step" Iowa Republicans are, I

suggest a new approach for our nation's Christian voters. Instead of buying into the hogwash that spews from the lamestreamers, perhaps American Christians could do us all a favor and start paying more attention to what's going on in the Hawkeye State.

We've gotten pretty good at picking the guy you *should've* voted for.

So, when Caucus Night rolls around and the media start creating their new narrative based on the results in Iowa, be sure to pay attention to the "close second," or the "surprise third." Because if you just gobble up the lamestream narrative, I can guarantee you, we'll all be right back where we have been the last several elections, picking the lesser of two evils.

You should pay attention to more than just the Republican results, though. Because while Iowa Republicans are often knocked for their inability to "pick the winner," Iowa Democrats are well-established as kingmakers.

The last five Iowa Democrat Caucus winners all went on to win the party's nomination. So, if you want to know who is likely to be the "greater of two evils" in November, you'll get a good look at him or her on Feb. 1.

Whoever wins the Democrat side will have a big impact on how the eventual GOP nominee is portrayed in the media, how he will frame his campaign for the general election, and what issues will be most visible during the course of the campaign. Christians need to be able to witness to these worldly issues.

So while the vast majority of you won't have much say in what happens next Monday night, you all need to be paying attention. The future of our nation and our freedoms depend upon it.