

Can the Body of Christ Disagree Without Looking Like the World?

Disagreement over the day's issues will not shatter the unity of the church.

We can see each day the attacks on the Christian community, but almost as frequent are examples of contention and discord inside the church. Some American Christians come to faith out of such a disorderly lifestyle and worldview that they ardently desire Christian orthodoxy and philosophical consistency to guide their lives thereafter. So far, so good.

Others are so nervous about the dominant secular culture in our nation that they, for all intents and purposes, insist that prevailing opinions, decisions on public policy issues and the wider cultural tides be provided or otherwise fully preordained only by leading Christian figures, Christian television programming and sufficiently boisterous attack-dog social media influencers presenting themselves under the "Christian" banner.

I am not criticizing these groups; I am merely unhappy that American evangelical Christians, having made some good spiritual decisions in their lives, aren't willing to do more thinking on their own.



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So, the question stands: Can the body of Christ disagree

without being as disagreeable as the secular world?

I see no reason why evangelicals should have to walk in lockstep on issues such as the culture skirmishes, the terrorist war on Israel, aid to Ukraine, how to address Chinese and Russian expansionism, whether health care policy is OK and certainly the 2024 presidential elections out of fear that disagreement on public-policy issues will get someone cancelled on social media, turn a family dinner into a riot and squash any unity within the Christian church. The fact is, it is OK for Christians to disagree on important political and social issues. By doing so, they have not sinned against one another.

The news media and the wider culture rarely examine events in light of what the Bible says or what God is saying. But as Christians, we should seek to understand the leading topics and questions of the day from the Bible's perspective. I believe we live in an upside-down world, where the world calls right wrong and wrong is called right. Biblical stances, especially on gay rights and abortion, among many others, are ridiculed mercilessly, while speaking about them is labeled "hate speech" more and more every month.

Perhaps there is no sharper example of the lightning-rod type of public debate than the topic of Donald Trump over the past nine years. I have written about Trump and posed the question raised by many Christian leaders, whether God raised up an imperfect leader as He did throughout the Bible to lead their nation at a crucial time. I believe He did, and I make that argument in my book, "God and Donald Trump."

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Some prophets even prophesied that Trump would win two terms, against all odds. Then Trump lost his second bid for office in

2020. Since then, the Democrats have tried to litigate Trump out of the 2024 election and politics in general. There have been seven frivolous lawsuits that would never be brought against anyone else. Prosecuting or jailing political opponents is what happens in third-world countries.

In a recent podcast I discussed this present political season and contrasted it with the fact there were no new wars during Trump's administration; that he advanced the cause of religious liberty, moved the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem as promise and appointed three conservative justices to the Supreme Court as part of his promise to overturn Roe vs. Wade. Did the debate on Trump's record proceed cordially?

Not even close. Especially from the other side of the political aisle. Yet we cannot wait for reasonable conversation to come from others with different political points of view, especially when some on that other side of the aisle only see enemies instead of worthy opponents and fellow citizens who have a different perspective. If we can't have order in our own house, we have no business expecting reasoned, fair, levelheaded debate from other points far afield in this season.

Let us build robust considerate conversations, and may the debates continue. It is perfectly OK to disagree with others inside the body of Christ. Even Christians sometimes change their minds on things. Let's do so agreeably, fairly, with the mind and the light of Christ, and lead by example.

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