

God and the Voting Booth

NOT EVERY POLITICAL ISSUE IS DEBATABLE FOR BELIEVERS. SOME CHOICES CAN BE READILY DISCERNED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD AS RIGHT OR WRONG.

On Resurrection Sunday this year we had a special visitation in our church service, but it was not from the Lord. A group of men and women from New York visited my congregation that day.

From an insider I learned that most of the people in this group were on paid leave from their regular jobs in New York so they could work on a “special project” in Florida. This project entailed recruiting and encouraging people to vote in the upcoming election.

That may sound like a good thing, but something did not seem right to me. Although we have a racially mixed congregation, our church is predominantly black. I would not have been as suspicious had it not been for the fact that this group appeared to be specifically targeting blacks in the state of Florida.

It is normal for groups to visit our church from around the world. So I requested that a representative from the New York group greet our congregation.

A man quickly responded and said that they had come to Florida to register voters. He added that they wanted to make sure the election went the “right way” in Florida this year.

He was very direct and did not pretend that worship was part of his group’s agenda. There was a holy hush in the sanctuary because by this time everyone knew where the group was coming from.

Boldly, I took the microphone and politely agreed with the man that people in the inner cities need to be encouraged to vote. I also informed him we would not tell the people whom they should vote for but would teach them what to vote for as believers.

We have always encouraged our members to vote not by race or political party but by issues. We believe that it is not a "color thing" or a "political thing" but a "Jesus thing." Prayer and the Word of God should lead us in every area of our lives.

We need a fresh move of God in America, and the Bible tells us that "righteousness exalts a nation" (Prov. 14:34, NKJV). So when we cast our votes, it should be according to righteousness.

PARTIES AREN'T PERFECT Politically speaking, no group is perfect because the political system is built on the opinions of men. Spiritually speaking, however, there are some things in life about which we do not have a right to our opinions, according to the Word of God.

Some of the issues we face in our country are debatable, but the massacre of unborn babies and same-sex marriages do not fall in this category. We are living in the last days, and according to the Scriptures, our rights as believers will become more obsolete as time goes on.

We must vote for what is right while we have the opportunity. The problem is that the god of this world has dulled the minds of many so that they cannot properly discern the difference between what is right and what is wrong.

God gave the priests instructions in Leviticus 10:10 to teach the people the difference between what was holy and what was common. We also must take a stand against what is common.

The common will always be unholy. If the world is drawn to it,

as saints, we had better run.

When the leader of our group of visitors signaled to his people to leave the church, they began filing out one after another. Outside, the group stood in front of our church during the service, cursing and lighting up their cigarettes.

But instead of distracting us, this interruption in our service took us to another level of worship. We stood for the truth that day, and the group left. When we resist the devil, He will flee! (See James 4:7.)

Most of my family members are generational Democrats, but they know nothing about the party. They are following the beliefs of their ancestors and will kill for what they believe, though they are not really sure what that is.

It amazes me that some people who confess Christianity are more sold out to a political party than they are to Jesus. I thank God this is a new day in which the saints of God will not vote for a man, a race or a political party.

God is touching the hearts of men and women to vote as He leads them. Hopefull this will prevent them from unwittingly voting for people who will make laws that would hurt them in the long run.

President Bush made the body of Christ aware of federal funds set aside for faith-based organizations. Can you imagine how mad the devil is about federal money being distributed to people of faith who are changing lives? Surely He would like to get someone in position to change these laws.

I am not happy about what happened at my service that Sunday. But what bothers me more is that while a group like this can come to my place of worship and solicit me to become part of a covert political agenda, I cannot go to a school to recruit a rebellious generation for Jesus.

I have never been involved in politics, but I must take a stand as one of the redeemed of the Lord. It is time for the church to open its mouth and declare truth to the world.

BELIEVERS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE On June 3, 2004, USA Today reported that the presidential election will be heavily influenced by those who go to church. The newspapers are prophesying that the church has a voice.

Psalms 107:2 declares, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so" (NKJV). The word "so" is *ken* in the Hebrew. It means to set upright and make straightforward and declare, "For this is true!" We must declare the truth!

Many honest people choose to remain silent and not be involved; but the devil always puts in his two cents. He is right there behind the scenes trying to run our country through the system of the world.

If we do not open our mouths in this upcoming election, the rocks will cry out! The blood of innocent babies will cry out! All of creation will cry out! We must say SO!

Proverbs 21:3 teaches that "to do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." By doing the right thing, we plant the greatest seed we can ever plant—a seed of righteousness.

Isaiah 59:14 says: "Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." According to Strong's Concordance, "equity" is *nekôchâh* in the Hebrew language. It is defined as "...[and] uprightness." Equity will enter when the people of the Lord stand up and say SO!

I was told by someone with knowledge of the visiting group's organization that their agenda is to derail the Bush campaign and unseat the president. Boy, did they come to the wrong black church that Sunday!

The New Yorkers involved with this effort took pride in the fact that they were sold-out to this effort. Their T-shirts displayed the slogan "Heroes for the Cause." They believe in what they are doing.

God is looking for saints who are strong in what they believe. My motive is not to lift up George W. Bush. Our president is not a perfect man, and he does not make all the right decisions; but neither do we as preachers.

I believe that Bush is a man after God's own heart. I was convinced of this when he appeared on national television for a political debate.

Members of the panel were asked who their favorite philosopher or person of thought was. Bush responded, "Jesus Christ, because He changed my life!"

President Bush declared at a presidential debate that he was born again. Many politicians will share the fact that they go to church but will not cross the line by using the words "born again." When they asked him what the term "born again" meant, he told them that if they had not experienced it, they would not understand. Glory to God! We need a man over this nation with that kind of experience.

The devil has an underlying agenda in the upcoming presidential election, but God is working behind the scenes. Wisdom tells us to lay aside all our prejudices and idiosyncrasies, find out what God is saying and then begin saying it too.

PROPHECY FULFILLED In John 10:4 God shows us that His sheep know His voice. The word translated "know" is eido in the Greek. It literally means to perceive and tell. We should be able to hear what God is saying and repeat it.

President Bush said he heard God say that He wanted him to be the president of the United States. He voiced aloud what he

heard God say and, surely, it came to pass. It was prophesied that a born-again believer would be in the White House, and the word of the Lord has been manifested in the eyes of the world.

Everybody is talking about the faith of George W. Bush. It is time for the people of God to connect with the prophetic Spirit of God and pray that God's kingdom will come and the will of God will be done in our nation.

I am sure both candidates for president are basically good men, but we are in the last days, and we do not need a good man; we need a "God man!" Good men go to church, but God's man will shout his faith from the mountaintop.

Psalm 75:6 tells us that promotion does not come from the east, west or south. It comes from the north. It is time for the saints of God to set their faces to the north, the secret place, and cry out to God for His will to be done in our midst.

By all means, register, vote, be a part of the election process, but know this is not about a political party. God will have the last say. He is doing a new thing in this nation, and I prophesy that it will be revealed to those who are bold enough to say SO!

Read a companion devotional.

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GOING DEEPER For further study on this topic: The Faith of George W. Bush by Stephen Mansfield (Charisma House) Marriage Under Fire by James Dobson (Multnomah) The Role of Pastors and Christians in Civil Government by David Barton (Wallbuilders).