

How The Christian Community Can Change American Politics for Good

A fascinating discovery has taken place recently in the state of California. Locals there attest that the wildfires that have ravaged the landscape, lives and livelihoods of residents for a decade don't seem to be getting any better. They seem to be getting worse, more frequent and more devastating.

The key question at hand is: How do you decrease wildfires in a largely arid landscape that gets more vulnerable with every fire? The answer: goats. No kidding. What Californians and residents in many other Western states have discovered is that when herds of goats are set free to graze in a dry landscape that is prone to wildfire, they feed on the invasive species of weeds and plants that come up after land has been scorched or not properly stewarded. In a short period of time, these herds can clean up acres upon acres in a manner more thorough and efficient than any machinery or chemical treatment. It's a picture of what can happen in America when we come together as a herd on common ground.

When we agree that we are done with the wildfires that have scorched our great land and set out together to clear the weeds and invading species, we will not only diminish the rate of wildfires, we will also restore what is beautiful in the land and what is native—the foundational values on which this country was founded.

In the mid-nineties, while working as a Hill staffer, I often attended prayer meetings and Bible studies held in the congressional office buildings. I frequently heard then House chaplain James D. Ford say, "Send your good men into the ministry; send your best men into politics." I'm here to tell

you that means women too. Do not be fooled into thinking that if you are building a career or raising a family, you are somehow exempt from an active role in your government or in supporting those in it.

We all have gifts to share, and we are modeling behavior for the next generation, whether that is for our own children or the young people we encounter in our community or work environment. The next generation is watching us. Will they emulate our good works or blame us for leaving them a society that is a tragic mess? In his novel "The Power of One," Bryce Courtenay contended that the actions of one person can impact the entire world. *Will you have an impact?*

I have hope for our country and our world, and I have hope that you will join me, one step at a time, one voice at a time, in this critical moment in our nation's history.

Be willing to go out and trust God! Remember, an individual *can* make a difference. Consider these practical steps you can take immediately. The following list offers some suggestions that will fit every personality and calling within the body of Christ. This list is not meant to overwhelm you, just to give you a variety of options for ways to get involved. Pray about what God would have YOU to do personally.

10 Steps to Changing Our Nation For The Better

1. Pray and fast.
2. Vote. Many Christians are registered but don't vote! If every Christian voted faithfully, we would win most of the races.
3. Get involved in primaries, not just general elections. *Everyone* needs to be doing something to help good candidates. This is critically important to weed out the good candidates from the mediocre or the bad.
4. Do your homework on who you are voting for—treat it like a job interview, not a passive activity. Listen to

interviews with candidates and officeholders. There is often more veracity in radio than in other media because you get everything “straight from the horse’s mouth,” so to speak.

5. Give money directly to good candidates.
6. Ask God if *you* are being called to run for office in your community. Consider running for the school board or county clerk. These positions are essential to the community. County clerks oversee all election processes and procedures. The primary function of the school board is to oversee the education of students in the community.
7. Volunteer to be a poll worker or poll watcher during the next election. Volunteer to work on a campaign.
8. Consider getting appointed to a board or a commission. Talk with your governor’s appointments secretary about serving in this way.
9. Take civics training. Make sure you and your children receive high-quality civics education.
10. Realize that you have influence, and don’t be afraid to use it. It may be two people, or it may be two million, but influence who you can to participate more actively in our political processes.

Once you have explored your options to make an impact as an individual, think about joining others to increase your reach. Think about the audience you want to impress. What do you want them to do once you connect with them? Start with the end in mind, then find others in your community to partner with to accomplish your goals. Link up with a group of people who think like you to sustain you. Then, once you link up, strategize about how to make a difference in your community, county or state.

This is truly a time for heroes. It is a time for people to stand up and be counted. In the same way that children do not raise themselves and healthy gardens do not stay free of weeds

on their own, a nation does not stay strong without the care of its people. It is time that we take full responsibility for what we have been entrusted to steward. Let's stop focusing only on what is wrong. Let's appreciate what is right. There's greatness in the people that make up this country, and there's greatness in you.

So, rise up! It's time for the body of Christ to step into its own power.

*The preceding is an excerpt from chapter 16 of **Terri Hasdorff's** "Running Into the Fire" (Charisma House, 2022). For more information, or to order the book, visit .*

Terri Hasdorff is a former congressional candidate and an executive-level leader with over 20 years' experience in government and politics. She began her career in 1991 in what is now called the White House Office of Public Engagement, where she had the honor of working with faith leaders from across the country. She later served on Capitol Hill for six years, then ran for a seat in the US House to represent Alabama's second congressional district. She has a bachelor's degree from Samford University, is a graduate of the senior executives program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and is currently in the executive MBA program at Oxford University.