

The Voting Christian Conscience

By Doug Hamilton

Here we are again with another Presidential Election. As a nation we are being asked to choose a man to lead our nation as a Commander in Chief. I have always followed the political scene of America, both before and after becoming a Christian. Having grown up in Iowa, the "Caucus State", we were heavily exposed to all of the Presidential candidates during my lifetime. It was not all uncommon to meet 2 or 3 of these candidates in a week.

Democracy of a Republic

We live in a nation where we have the freedom to choose our own leaders through election. We can choose our leadership knowing that we must be subjected to them.

- Romans 13:1-2 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. ² Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

We are to be praying that we end up with leaders that will allow us to best live the Christian life.

- 1 Timothy 2:1-2 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

Jesus was often pulled into political battles in His day.

- Mark 12:12-13 And they {"the chief priests and the scribes and the elders" Mk 11:27} were seeking to seize Him, and *yet* they feared the people, for they understood that He spoke the parable against them. And *so* they left Him and went away. ¹³ Then they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Him in order to trap Him in a statement.
- Here we find three political parties of the day, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Herodians, pooling their power together to go against the One candidate that did not share their worldly struggle for power. Jesus did not say, "I will not be involved in your politics, but used it as an opportunity to reach even more people with the truth. His interest was the kingdom of God and He was not shying away from this. He was trying to use what He had to be an influence on the world.

What was important to Jesus?

- Jesus wants us to put God first in our lives and our wallet will find a place toward the back of the list.
 - Matthew 6:33-34 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
- Jesus would never want us to vote our wallet above the principles of God. Jesus never said go after the money, but to seek the will of God and act on it.

The primary factor in the Christian vote should never be their wallet.

- Jesus has never wanted our earthly wishes to come before His religious principles. He focused on loving God with all our heart, soul and mind AND loving our

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neighbor as ourselves (Mt 22:37). The money in our pocket is the least of what He is concerned about our life.

- Matthew 6:19-21 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”²⁰ “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;”²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- Christians should never seek to vote their wallets first, yet many in the world will use this to decide their vote.

The Focus of the Lesson

What principles should be important to a Christian when casting their vote? This is the aim of the lesson this morning, for Christians whom are sincere should be passionate about certain principles found in God's word. What I am sharing in this lesson is simply a few of these principles that cause me conviction in my decision. I will not tell you for WHOM I vote President, but for WHY I vote President. I will share with you five of them.

Factor #1) Abortion

US ANNUAL ABORTION STATISTICS

- In 2005 (the most recent year for which there is reliable data), approximately 1.21 million abortions took place in the U.S. From 1973 through 2005, more than 45 million legal abortions have occurred in the U.S. (AGI). That is about one abortion every 26 seconds.
- Nearly half of pregnancies among American women are unintended; about 4 in 10 of these are terminated by abortion. Twenty-two percent of all U.S. pregnancies end in abortion. (AGI).
- 82% of all abortions are performed on unmarried women (CDC).
- Women between the ages of 20-24 obtained 33% of all abortions (CDC).
- 47% of women who have abortions had at least one previous abortion (AGI).
- On average, women give at least 3 reasons for choosing abortion: 3/4 say that having a baby would interfere with work, school or other responsibilities; about 3/4 say they cannot afford a child; and 1/2 say they do not want to be a single parent or are having problems with their husband or partner (AGI).

With that in mind, we are left with a key question: When does the life begin for a human being? Some secular answers: Birth, 6th month, 3rd month. The biblical answer is at conception.

- According to all geneticists, the unborn baby actually possesses his or her (not “its”) own DNA. The “little one” (fetus) of the womb has DNA totally different from the mother and father. This is true of the ninth month, the eighth, the seventh and all the way down to the moment of conception. There is no other individual in the cosmos that shares his genetics other than an identical twin or the like.
- According to the Bible: The entire time they are in the womb, the scriptures recognize the unborn child as an UNBORN CHILD. Below are just a dozen of

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many dozens of verses in the Bible to indicate that the unborn child is not a fetal tissue blob, but a human being.

- Gen 25:23; Gen 30:22-23; Judg 16:17; Job 1:21; Job 31:15; Ps 22:10; Ps 139:13-14; Eccl 11:5; Isa 44:2; Isa 49:1; Jer 1:4-5; Jer 20:17; Hosea 12:3; Luke 1:15; Luke 1:31; Luke 1:41-42; Gal 1:15; Matt 1:23-25.
- I cannot ignore these and hundreds of other passages in the Holy Scriptures. I cannot ignore this and willingly extend my vote for a politician that cannot recognize this.

Factor #2) Education

The Christian is taught that instruction of children begins with the parents.

- Prov 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.”
- 2 Tim 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.
- Deut 6:6-7 "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; 7 and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.
- There is a natural responsibility of the parent to be the instructor of their own children. Without the early and continual guidance from the parents an educational system will collapse.

I want to know that one of the factors for my Christian vote is going for the person that has the greatest possibility to empower educators to not be hostile to the principles of the word of God and the Christian faith. You and I both know that the government has been increasingly hostile to our children being enlightened to a Creator. I cannot easily vote for anyone that will not allow parents to freely impart the faith to their children.

Factor #3) Fiscal Responsibility

Economically, things are not good right now and they are going to be growing worse.

- We are 16 trillion dollars in debt! That is over \$50,000 for every man, woman and child in the entire country. \$20,000 of that has come in just the last four years.

It gets worse!

- If you figure in the projected entitlement and Social Security obligations, the total debt of \$53 trillion. That's \$175,154 per man, woman and child. Now your new interest payment plan brings you to just under \$15,000 per month for only 60 months. Of course, you cannot get this interest-free, but at about 9%. Now your payment is more than \$21,000 a month! Do you have MasterCard or Visa to put charge put thi on?
- It was not always this way in our country when they set it up, for our nation's founders were against debt. At the writing of the Constitution they were

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concerned about debt incurred to finance the Revolutionary War, and it was their intention to promptly pay it off.

- Alexander Hamilton (federalist paper #7) called for the "extinguishment of all debt."
- Thomas Jefferson later wrote, "I place economy among the first and most important of republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of dangers to be feared."
- Many times the founding fathers of our country would reflect on the Bible and history and conclude that we must never be in debt to other nations.

This is because the Bible also teaches to avoid being in debt.

- Prov. 22:7 The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower {becomes} the lender's slave.
- Ps 37:21 The wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives.
- Rom 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled {the} law.
- The Jews were to be so serious about the issue of personal debt that God told them every seven years to release all debts of their fellow Jews (Dt 15:1-2).

Our nation has been living outside of their budget because they have had no budget. We are debt driven as a nation. I personally cannot cast my vote for anyone who is not fiscally conservative.

Factor #4) Traditional Marriage

If you think that the issue of marriage is not important to the success of a civilization, you could not be more wrong. Countless studies all indicate that the marital union of one man and one woman is a key to the stability of a nation.

- Marriage is the greatest social educator of children. It is the institution that most effectively teaches the civic virtues of honesty, loyalty, trust, self-sacrifice, personal responsibility, and respect for others. The virtues cultivated between men and women in marriage, and between parents and the children, radiate outward into civil society. They deepen in married men and women strong habits of devotion to civic life. (Wilcox, Sacred Vows, Public Purposes: Religion, the Marriage Movement, & Marriage Policy, The Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion, p.3,28, 2002)
- Children raised in intact families are more likely to attend college, are physically and emotionally healthier, are less likely to be physically or sexually abused, less likely to use drugs or alcohol and to commit delinquent behaviors, have a decreased risk of divorcing when they get married, are less likely to become pregnant/impregnate someone as a teenager, and are less likely to be raised in poverty (Why Marriage Matters: 26 Conclusions from the Social Sciences, Bradford Wilcox, Institute for American Values, 2004)
- "Marriage is a wealth generating institution." The commitment of husband and wife fosters economic specialization and economies of scale (two can live as cheaply as one). The link between divorce/unwed childbirth and child poverty, as

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well as the rising government expense for welfare programs, testify to the economic benefits of marriage. (Whitehead & Popenoe, *The State of Our Unions* 2006, p.27)

- Marriage particularly benefits the weakest members of the community. An analysis of recent social statistics concluded that “the preferential option for the poor begins in the home.” (B. Wilcox, *The Facts of Life & Marriage*, Touchstone, Jan/Feb 2005)

I cannot nor will not extend my vote without considering which candidate will best answer this issue on traditional marriage.

Factor #5) Aiding the Poor

It does not matter what civilization has arisen since the dawn of mankind, there will be hurting people in the society. God recognizes this fact and addressed it in His scriptures.

- Leviticus 19:9-19 ‘Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰ ‘Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God.
- Prov. 22:9 He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor.
- Prov. 29:7. The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such concern.
- 1 John 3:17. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

The problem with politicians is when they attempt to take money from people by force, help the poor in spite of Jesus and refer it as "*the right thing to do*". Charity begins with the candidate, not with a proposal of social programs. I want to know how giving they have been with their own money, not our money. If a candidate has given a generous percentage in their adult life and another candidate did not, I will support the foremost any day. Jesus said you can tell a lot about a person by their generosity. So can we if the evidence shows thus. I definitely use this as a factor when casting my vote.

Conclusion:

My personal five factors in a candidate for President: 1) Abortion 2) Education 3) Fiscal Responsibility 4) Traditional Marriage and 5) Aiding the Poor

The challenge for the week:

Write down five reasons why you are considering a specific candidate. Compare those reasons with the logic of the Bible. If your reasons do not line up with principles from the Bible and your candidate does not live up to the standard, then ask yourself this one question: "Can I vote for this person with a Christian conscience?"