

Introduction

Like many of you, I have already voted. During this long and contentious political season, I sought to be well-informed before I cast my vote for the candidates whom I thought would lead the United States of America according to the principles of government established by our Founding Fathers and undergirded by God's law, the Holy Scriptures. Because there is ubiquity in ethics (there are no neutral decisions), I knew this to be a solemn and sacred duty, and that one day I would stand before God to give an answer for my choices.

As many of you have done, I prayed for wisdom and studied the most important issues facing every American by reading, listening, and discussing in order to gain knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.



Introduction

The books, articles, essays, social media posts and feeds, townhalls, rallies, commentators, and debates provided everything I needed to vote with a clear conscience and with confidence. Sadly, there is so much lying going on in our culture today that multiple reliable sources were needed to combat them before the discernment, truth, and conviction came – but it did come.

In every election, we are confronted with competing worldviews which are either closer or more distant from a biblical worldview. In *Blinded by Might*, Cal Thomas correctly asserted, "You can't apply the principles of a kingdom not of this world to a kingdom of this world....Where politics is about power, the Christian faith is about truth."

Introduction

It is now only two days before our national election. At this point, I do not think it would be beneficial nor practical for me to share with you how I arrived at my choices for the various offices.

Knowing, however, that the final results of the 2020 Election are around the corner, that millions will be elated while millions more will be upset, and that the best way to accept victory or defeat is by thinking God's thoughts after Him (analogical thinking), I thought it would be helpful, in the light of our current series on the *Immeasurable Greatness of God's Majesty & Power*, to prepare ourselves for the election outcomes in the light of His revealed Word. The Sovereign Lord has spoken and His Word is "a lamp to our feet" (Ps. 119:105).



"Your Law is My Delight" (Ps. 119:77)

- 1. After the election, God, the Creator of the world and all things in it, will still be enthroned in His cosmic house, heaven His throne, the earth His footstool.
- 2. After the election, every square inch of the entire creation will still belong to Jesus Christ who will cry out, "This is mine! This belongs to me!" (Abraham Kuyper). This is my Father's world.
- **3. After the election**, the triune God's cultural mandate will still be in force (Gen. 1:28), and we will continue to be God's vicegerents, retaining our royal status and our God-given calling to exercise dominion over all things. We will continue to work to reclaim the earth and mankind for the Creator's holy purposes and glory.

- 4. After the election, we will continue to uncompromisingly affirm the sole authority of Christ over all people and resolutely reject culture's claims to loyalty. "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life" (Jn. 17:1-2). "In Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority" (Col. 2:10).
- 5. After the election, Jesus' kingdom will still not be of this world. "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is My kingdom is not of this realm" (Jn. 18:36).

- 6. After the election, there will continue to be a sharp antithesis between Christ and the world. "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (Jn. 15:19). "What partnership has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?" (II Cor. 6:14-15).
- 7. After the election, we who have been redeemed and rescued from the pollutions of the world are not meant to turn our backs on life, but only to avoid all participation in the world's uncleanness. Simon Peter urged his readers to "keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable" (I Pt. 2:12).

Two Distinct and Separate Kingdoms

- One is temporal; the other is eternal.
- Christ is Lord over both.
- God has given us the Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission.
- We are under obligation to both.
- We are to take part in redeeming the fallen world by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- We must continually place ourselves under Christ's authority as citizens of His eternal kingdom and as citizens on earth.
- We will never be able to change our culture solely through political power. Political power has no ability to change human hearts.



The Christian's Relation to the World

"The member of the Body of Christ has been delivered from the world and called out of it. He must give the world a visible proof of his calling, not only by sharing in the Church's worship and discipline, but also through the new fellowship of brotherly living. If the world despises one of the brethren, the Christian will love and serve him. If the world does him violence, the Christian will succor and comfort him. If the world dishonors and insults him, the Christian will sacrifice his own honor to cover his



Dietrich Bonhoeffer 1906-1945



The Christian's Relation to the World

brother's shame. Where the world seeks gain, the Christian will renounce it. Where the world exploits, he will dispossess himself, and where the world oppresses, he will stoop down and raise up the oppressed. If the world refuses justice, the Christian will pursue mercy, and if the world takes refuge in lies, he will open his mouth for the dumb and bear testimony to the truth. For the sake of the brother, be he Jew or Greek, bond or free, strong or weak, noble or base, he will renounce all fellowship with the world. For the Christian serves the fellowship of the Body of Christ, and he cannot hide it from the world. He is called out of the world to follow Christ."

- 8. After the election, we must continue to be the light of the world. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:14-16).
- 9. After the election, we must continue to be the salt of the earth. "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing any more, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men" (Mt. 5:13).



Functioning As Salt and Light

"Would it not be better to remind ourselves of other complementary truths, such as the fact that God remains sovereign over the entire created order, that we ourselves are sinners constantly in need of grace so that we are never more than poor beggars telling others where there is bread, that the gospel transforms people such that they begin to function as salt and light in a world that is decaying and dark, that God's gifts of common grace are good gifts even when they are embedded in a culture dominantly characterized by rebellion against God, and that on the last day justice will not only be done, but will be seen to be done?"



D.A. CarsonPhD, Cambridge University
1946 -

- 10. After the election, we are commanded to "be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment" (Rom. 13:1-2).
- 11. After the election, God will continue to exercise dominion and authority over Caesar. "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge" (Acts 4:19). "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

The Supremacy of Christ

- "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things were created through him and for him" (Col. 1:16).
- Both civil government and the Church exist through divine ordination.
- All authority on earth is, by nature, limited authority.
- God's larger governance of the world includes the civil government.
- Rulers are called "servants of God" (Rom. 13:6). Cyrus is God's "shepherd" and "shall fulfill all my purpose" (Is. 44:28).
- All rulers will appear before the throne of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings, and should expect divine judgment.



- 12. After the election, embrace civil law. "Our generation needs to recognize in civil law the will of God by which He seeks to redirect fallen humanity's evil propensities for greed and power and privilege, and by which through civil order He seeks to reaffirm His intention for man's purposive and creative life in community" (Carl F.H. Henry)
- 13. After the election, accept civic responsibility and duty. "Those who like evangelicals believe that God wills the exercise of civil authority for the preservation of justice in a fallen society, that civil government has limited powers, that God holds nations answerable to His published will, that God acts purposefully and providentially in the history of nations, will bear their responsibility and duty in the public arena" (Henry).



- **14. After the election,** we must seek to be obedient to God's law. "Fulfillment of public duty involves keeping the social commandments of the Decalogue, expressly those against adultery, murder, stealing, and coveting another's wife and property (Rom. 13:8-10)" (Henry).
- **15. After the election,** we must always be ready to suffer or even die (I Pt. 3:9, 14-17; 4:12-19). Believers may suffer because they strive to live lives of true justice (I Pt. 4:15).
- **16. After the election,** we must continue to challenge legal injustice. Christians are "to be publicly engaged in the arena of justice to the limit of personal ability and opportunity but always within the boundaries of morality" (Henry).



17. After the election, pray. "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity" (I Tim. 2:1-2). "Pray for kings, though the kings at this time were heathens, enemies to Christianity, and persecutors of Christians, yet they must pray for them, because it is for the public good that there should be civil government, and proper persons entrusted with the administration of it, for whom therefore we ought to pray....Here see what we must desire for kings, that God will so turn their hearts, and direct them and make use of them, that we under them may lead a quiet and peaceable life" (Matthew Henry).



18. After the election, seek the welfare of the city. "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jer. 29:7).

"This forbids them to attempt anything against the public peace while they were subjects to the king of Babylon. Though he was a heathen, an idolater, an oppressor, and an enemy of God and His church, yet while he gave them protection, they must pay him allegiance, and live quiet and peaceable lives under him, in all godliness and honesty, not plotting to shake off his yoke, but patiently leaving it to God in due time to work deliverance for them" (Matthew Henry).



Final Considerations

- 1. Resist the flight from personal civic responsibility.
- 2. Be passionately devoted to evangelism and soul-winning, but do not neglect public affairs, justice, and law.
- 3. Do not distrust divine providence in the life and history of the nations.
- Do not question God's entrustment of power to civil government to preserve justice and order in fallen history.
- 5. Avoid simplistic and fragmentary political thought and action.
- 6. "We must not confuse the Kingdom of God with our country. To say it another way, 'We should not wrap Christianity in our national flag'" (Francis Schaeffer).





The Weapons of Our Warfare

"The strongholds and pretensions can only be demolished under two conditions: one, that we don't fight with the world's weapons, but with divine ones; and two, that our obedience is complete. We have been trying to use the world's weapons of political power, and we have not been sufficiently obedient to the call of Jesus to care as he cares and do as he did. No wonder conservative Christians continue to run into brick walls" (from *Blinded by* Might: Can the Religious Right Save America?).

Henri Nouwen

The Temptation of Power

"The temptation to consider power an apt instrument for the proclamation of the gospel is the greatest temptation of all....Maybe it is that power offers an easy substitute for the hard task of love. It seems easier to be God than to love God, easier to control people than to love people, easier to own life than to love life."