

AVOID PRAGMATIC VOTING

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” -1 Corinthians 10:31

The only men who are truly qualified for civil office are those who meet the standards set down in the Word of God. God is sovereign over civil government, and the sole prerogative to establish what kind of men can and ought to serve as magistrates belongs to Him. Men who do not meet the biblical standards are not fully fit to serve as rulers. These standards instruct citizens who have the liberty of choosing their civil magistrates on how to carry out their duty in accord with the will of God. It is God’s revealed will that His ministers in the civil sphere be men who fear Him. God’s blessings are on the people who choose men of ability, character, and spiritual maturity.

Voting for a biblically qualified candidate who appears to have no chance of winning or refraining from voting when there is no qualified candidate, are not the *waste of a vote*, but rather, obedience to God. Obedience to God is never a waste of time or effort, but the compromise of biblical truth always is. Compromise sacrifices victory in the long run for the sake of immediate “success” or “peace,” while godly obedience sacrifices immediate gratification for the sake of ultimate victory. Christians often complain that there are no godly men to vote for, but when one does appear, they don’t vote for him anyway because, they reason, “he can’t win.” Can we expect the Lord to give us qualified men as candidates for civil office if Christians are not committed in principle to supporting them in obedience to biblical law? The only men who are truly qualified for civil office are those who meet the standards set down in the Word of God.

The Bible contains explicit instructions concerning the qualifications for civil officers, and to these the Christian ought to look as he determines who he will support with his time, money, and vote. There are several texts (I will only cite a few) that set forth the standards/principles for choosing civil magistrates...

Exodus 18:21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens...

Without going into too much elaboration, we can glean several Biblical standards from the text:

1. The leaders must be men, as opposed to women.
2. They must be men who are able.
3. They must be men who fear God.
4. They must be men of truth.
5. They must hate covetousness.

Deuteronomy 1:13 Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

1. Wise men.
2. Men of understanding.
3. Men who are known (*proven character*).

Deuteronomy 16:18-20 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

1. Men who refuse to wrest judgment (*rightly judges regardless of the consequences*).
2. Men who refuse to respect persons for any reason whatsoever.
3. Men who will not be swayed by money or favor.
4. Men who refuse to pervert the words of the righteous.

Genesis 9:5-7 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

Deuteronomy 21:6-9 And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley: And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them. So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

1. Rulers are to HATE shedding of innocent blood.

In the text, if a murderer could not be found, great solemnity was provided by the leadership for putting away the guilt of bloodshed from the land, as an expression of detesting that sin.

There is much more, but for sake of time I will only list a few more without commentary...

2 Samuel 23:3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

2 Chronicles 19:6-7 And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

Nehemiah 7:2 That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.

etc...

Granted the context for many of the above principles were applicable under O.T. theocratic conditions, however, the principles set forth should be seriously considered by all Christians today. The Christian who believes that the Word of God is able to instruct him in righteousness and equip for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17), including the work of voting, will necessarily turn to the Scripture for guidance.

—B.W.