

## **The Believer's Ballot**

by Rabbi Manuel Rodriguez Jr.

As Election Day approaches this November 4th many believers are going to go to the polls and cast a ballot for the candidate they think will be the best for this Nation. Many will vote based upon a candidate's stance on the economy and other issues. And unfortunately some will even vote based upon the likeability factor of the candidate. However important the issues are personally, there is for the believer only one standard that we should vote by; the Biblical Standard.

Many reading this may disagree with bringing faith into the political arena or visa versa. However, the Bible has much to say concerning how people of faith are to vote and help select leaders of their nation. The Bible speaks clearly concerning all offices of leadership. From the lowest of offices to the highest the believer must first consult the Scriptures in order to follow the Biblical Standard rather than our own standard. The Bible, for the believer, is the final authority concerning all matters of faith and life; this would also include the political arena where votes are cast for tomorrow's leaders. The ideas and standards that I am about to express are not my own, but are based upon the unchanging Word of God.

The Bible states; "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" – Proverbs 14:34. Because the Bible declares "Righteousness exalts a nation" it could be argued that those in office do not reflect the people of a nation, but those who put them in office; namely voters. When looking at a candidate the Bible directly lets the believer know; the issue of righteousness should be considered above all else. Although issues on the economy and healthcare are important there are other matters that the Bible speaks of at being at the forefront of every issue. And these issues all have to do with righteousness.

What does the Bible have to say? The Bible tells us that there are three things that specifically belong to God and not to man. The first is life. God is the Creator of all things living and specifically human life; "For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb" – Ps 139:13. Where does your candidate stand on the issue of life? The founding fathers of this Nation believed that God held the matter of life above all else and have told us in the Declaration of Independence that the right to life is the first of the inalienable rights of man. And no one is to interfere with that right. Signer of the Declaration of Independence James Wilson said, "With consistency, beautiful and undeviating, human life from its commencement to its close is protected by common law. In the contemplations of law, life begins when the infant is first able to stir in the womb (at conception). By the law, that life is protected." The right to life (as defined by our founding fathers) belongs even to the unborn, which is the Biblical Standard. And defending the life of the unborn must continue to remain a priority for Biblical voters. Where does your candidate stand on the issue of the right to life?

The second issue that a believer must examine is the issue of marriage. The institution of marriage was specifically set up by God, to be between one man and one woman.

Anything beyond this Biblical definition should be considered unrighteous. Concerning marriage the Bible states; “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh” – Genesis 2:24. According to the Bible, marriage is not based upon the self-willed pleasures of man, but unequivocally upon the absolute truth of God. Marriage is Biblically defined to be between one man and one woman; this is the Biblical standard. The defense of marriage even goes beyond this earthly realm. Marriage is considered to represent Messiah’s love for His Bride; the Assembly. Where does your candidate stand on the issue of marriage?

The third issue that a believer must look at is the candidate’s support for Israel. Along with life and marriage, God expresses that Israel directly, emphatically and prophetically also belongs to Him; “The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land (Israel) is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.” – Leviticus 25:23. Israel belongs to God. And as believers we are mandated to stand for Israel; and not just come along side her; “Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, may they prosper who love her” – Psalm 122:6. No one is allowed to divide the land that God so much considers to be His very own. It is vitally important to know your candidate’s stance on Israel. God considers those who wish to divide His Land worthy of His judgment; “I will enter into judgment with them..., they have divided My land” – Joel 3:2. Where does your candidate stand on the issue of supporting Israel?

Although, the economy and health care are very important issues these are not the most important. A believer is not called to cast a vote with their pocketbook, but with their conscience (with knowledge). And a believer’s conscience is to be guided by the Biblical Standard set forth by God Himself and revealed to us in the person of Messiah. The idea of government was set up by God to protect the people and the people were called to bring forth a righteous government to do so; “When the righteous rule, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan” – Proverbs 29:2. When one stands before the Lord on the Day of Judgment; one is not going to be judged how our works helped the national deficit, but whether or not we held to the Biblical Standard in our works.

“Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s” – Matthew 22:21. Pay your taxes and vote; these are your civic duties. But also, defend that which belongs to God; Life, Marriage and Israel; this is our Biblical mandate. Many today mistakenly think that the Lord’s command to render unto Caesar and render unto God, means that we are not to get involved in the civic and political arena. However, the Bible clearly commands that we get involved in both the spiritual and the political. Founding father Peter Muhlenberg stated, “I am convinced it is my duty so to do; and duty I owe to God and my Country.”

This November when you go to cast your ballot, I ask that you consider the Biblical Standard set forth by God Himself in the choosing of a candidate. Vote considering the issue of righteousness at the forefront; rather than your feelings about the economy and other issues. I close with the words of John Hancock; “I urge you, by all that is dear, by

all that is honorable, by all that is sacred, not only that ye pray but that ye act." For the sake of this generation and future generations you must act with all righteousness. May the Lord bless you and keep you in this time of great decision.

Shalom