



THE CHURCH & POLITICS: Evangelical = Republican?

"Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democrat answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future."

—John F. Kennedy

1. **A Crisis for Religion:** a drop of attendance from 70% U.S. attendance to 47% in the last twenty years. [Gallup Polling]

- Millennials and Gen Z's leaving in droves.
- Boomers and Xers leaving because they're allergic to the religious right. [David Campbell, U of Notre Dame]
- Democrats have dropped out of churches at a 23% rate, independents at an 18% rate, and Republicans at 12% rate [Gallup]

2. **A Crisis for our Society**

- It all started with Patrick Buchanan's "Holy War" speech at the 1992 Republican Convention, calling the Christian Right to "take back our cities...our culture...our country."
- The middle is gone, or at least has gone silent. Social and other media are controlled by the voices of the fringe right and left.

- “Strong Majority” of Trump supporters see all Democrats as socialists. “Strong Majority” of Biden supporters see all Republicans as fascists. [U of Virginia poll]
- Even Christians are divided on politics, rather than united in Christ.

3. **Our Hope: The Bible is not Silent on Political Issues**

- **The Good:** Only government stands between us and the Law of the Jungle. Therefore, God has ordained all government for our good and protection [Romans 13:3]. Some of God’s choicest servants were high officials in government, even that of pagan nations.
- **The Bad:** Politics tempts us to trade grace for carnal weapons; war against flesh and blood rather than dark forces in heavenly realms. It tempts us to depend on Machiavellian tactics rather than acting like Jesus. [Ephesians 6:10-18]
- **The Ugly:** When politicians are dividers, not unifiers, and appeal to our worst instincts, they corrupt us more than we know, and disillusion our next generations who watch us in action.

4. **What does God’s Word tell us about Politics?**

- 1) **Christians must remember Who we are.**
[Philippians 3:30; I Corinthians 6:19-20;
John 13:34-35; Matthew 28:16-20]
- 2) **Christians must remember *Where* we are.**
[Jeremiah 29:5-8]
- 3) **It is God’s purpose for the Church to remain separate from the civil government.** [Mark 12:14-18] In the Old Testament, there was a thick Mosaic wall between the palace and temple. Jesus said that God and Caesar were separate spheres. Three governments serve as checks and balances on each other.
 - Family

- Church
- Civil

History proves that, when the church gets in bed with the civic government, both are corrupted, and families suffer.

5. **Our Answers: how do we respond to those who call out the Church or Christians for mixing religion with politics?**
 - 1) **Begin with self-reflection on our own views and behavior.**
 - 2) **Admit the truth, don't defend the indefensible.**
 - 3) **Put them on the same page with Jesus.** [John 12:22]
 - 4) **Get them to the Gospel** [if the Spirit leads and they are ready. Remember, our job isn't to defend the gospel, but to share it]
 - 5) **Not all professing Evangelicals are really Evangelical Christians.**
 - 6) **Both policies and character matter.**
 - 7) **The Church is full of great Christians and ministry leaders who have not focused on the political gospel.**
 - 8) **Though my hope is in Jesus, I have a responsibility, for the good of the country I live in, as well as the bigger world. So I will vote, and the one I cast will reflect my biblical values both for the character and policies of the person running.**
6. **Our Approach: Saying the right things in the right way**
[I Peter 3;15]