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AP Content :: In the News

Religion in Politics?

by Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Q.

Should Christians let their religious convictions affect their political convictions?

A.

Many Americans will go to the polls this week to indicate their choice of political leaders. It has long been a common sentiment that “religion and politics don’t mix”—meaning that one should keep these two spheres separate and distinct, and that political preference be exercised without the interference of religious opinion. But the Bible contradicts this notion. For the faithful Christian, God’s will naturally permeates every aspect of life and takes precedence over everything and everyone (Matthew 6:33). Every thought and every action is subjected to the scrutiny of Scripture (2 Corinthians 10:5). While many decisions in life are left by God to individual taste and personal preference, nevertheless, every area of life must be approached with a proper understanding of moral and spiritual principles that may impinge on one’s decision-making. The Christian is free to form a personal opinion on many political questions—from whether the government should fund healthcare, social security, and public education, to how foreign policy should be conducted. No one’s soul is jeopardized by the stance taken on these matters. Nor has God ever destroyed cities or nations on account of these political concerns.

But we must face the fact that religious and moral issues are being politicized. Just because politicians seize upon these issues, dragging them into the political arena, does not mean that they are exempt from religious scrutiny. The two premiere moral issues confronting the nation are same-sex marriage and the butchery of unborn babies (from abortion to embryonic stem cell research). Like the great prophets of old (e.g., Amos 7:10ff.; Mark 6:17-18), Christians have the divine obligation to stand firm against all politicians who support such evil behaviors. Indeed, our voting should be guided by the same principle articulated by Jehu when he challenged Jehoshaphat’s political affiliation with King Ahab: “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord?” (2 Chronicles 19:2).

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