

The 2024 Election

I Timothy 2:1-6

October 13, 2024

Please open your Bibles today to I Timothy 2. Pew Bible. Today we're going to talk about the upcoming election. OK, Unclench your stomach. Relax. I'm not going to give you another political commercial. You've seen enough of them already. A young child was just learning to walk and the two grandfathers were trying to figure out what he'd be when he grew up. They put a Bible, a dollar bill, and a shot glass of whiskey on the coffee table to see which he'd go to. If he went to the Bible, he'd be a preacher. If he took the dollar, he'd become a businessman, and if he took the whiskey, he'd be a drunk. The little guy toddles over, sticks the dollar bill in his diaper, takes a swig of the whiskey and walks off with the Bible. The one grandad about passed out. What does that mean ask the other? He's going to be a politician! And then there's the National Association of clowns who are suing the DC politicians for unfair competition.

This fall's election is on everyone's mind and I dare say each of us think about it every day, perhaps several times a day. Some are worried sick, some are unconcerned, some are working feverishly. How should a follower of Jesus approach this election? I'm glad you asked! For some Biblical advice, please stand if you are able as we read from 1 Tim 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.

Let's begin by praising God today for the incredible privilege we have in this nation that most people in the world today and most people throughout history never had: the opportunity to choose our own leaders. Say vote. When Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, most of the world was under the Roman Emperor who ruled at will. Shortly after this was written, Christians faced cruel persecution by the Roman emperors. In most cultures throughout history, kings, chiefs, dictators, and other leaders have fought their ways into authority by defeating and crushing their rivals. They then held power as long as they could until another strong man pushed them out. At no point in the Bible do we find any nation where the people elected their own leaders. And at few points in history until 1776. So cherish this precious gift and be sure you vote. Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen to appeal to Caesar and I can't imagine him NOT voting in an election if he was allowed to. I read something this week that nearly 40 million US Christians will not vote in this election. That astounds me. Why would we who are called to be light and salt, not use this precious privilege that our forefathers and fellow citizens died to give and protect for us. So number 1, please vote! Early voting has

already begun and this Tuesday is the deadline to register. There's more information on schedules in the October newsletter.

But that raises the question, who do we vote for? I think the better question is **what** do we vote for? Say what. The candidates for office including those for president, senator, representative, are all human beings. Who knew? Sinful, flawed, imperfect people. Their opponents are doing a very good job of pointing out all their flaws so we can all see them. But each of these candidates does represent policies and principles that we must research and cipher out. To refer to our scripture today, some policies will allow us to live more peaceful, godly, and holy lives than others. Some policies are indeed more Biblical than others regardless of the flawed candidates who represent them.

Since these are national elections, the issues revolve around national concerns. 1. How will human life be protected? Both in the womb and out of it. Say life. Over 65 million unborn children have been slaughtered in this country and some want to reverse the recent Supreme Court decision and enshrine abortion forever. Some oppose it. Christians should be concerned about these unborn ones who are the least of the least of these. On numerous occasions, Jesus highlighted how much He loves and values children. And if He, then also should we.

In addition, human sexuality is an issue. The whole transgender question and the transing of our children, even at taxpayer expense is an issue that the congress and the next President will likely face. Is it OK and even preferable to cut off body parts and give hormones to children that will change their lives forever? Some candidates favor this and some oppose it. Should we allow biological males into women's locker rooms and on their athletic teams? Should we encourage schoolchildren to commit sins that are an abomination to God. It's hard for me to believe these are real issues today but they very much are and we need leaders and policies that will protect our daughters, sisters, children, and wives.

Of course support for Israel is also an important national issue. Say Israel. God has never withdrawn His promise to Abraham to bless those who bless him and to curse those who curse him. And we have many in this country and some running for office who have supported those who curse Israel and call for its destruction rather than its protection. We need leaders who will stand against anti-Semitism and discrimination of all types and who will, as Paul said, wield their authority to maintain order and punish wrongdoers.

Energy and economic policies are also important for these impact the lives of every single American and even many around the world. When America does well, it benefits most other countries. But it also benefits you, your family, your neighbors and our community. God has provided resources for us to use wisely to care for ourselves

and others and we need polices and tax structures that make that possible. Some economic policies are clearly better than others and how the government encourages or discourages work, business, and saving can have enormous impacts on the everyday lives of citizens. We see this in Venezuela where a shift from democratic and free enterprise policies toward socialism has resulted in suffering, misery and even death for many people. The Biblical mandate in 2 Thessalonians 3 that if man won't work, he shouldn't eat has proven valuable in this country ever since its founding in Jamestown while still caring for those who **can't** work which the Bible also commands.

Freedoms of speech and religion also have a direct impact on our everyday lives, that we might be able to live peaceful, quiet, godly, holy lives. Some would like to use the power of government, and have and are, to force us to accept certain sins as normal. To prohibit free speech on Biblical teachings, especially on human sexuality, and even imprison those of us who do. Power to restrict any information or teaching except what they want shared. There is a lot at stake in this election.

Time doesn't permit us to cover all the issues, but Sister Karen Poff is teaching a Sunday School class on many of these. There are also voter guides on the table that provide comparisons on many issues. Both Presidential candidates have platforms of what they support and oppose and both have actual records of what they have and have not done in these areas in the past. Neither candidate and neither party platform aligns perfectly with our statement of faith, nor with the Bible. But look for agreement. Look for the lesser of two evils. This is true in every election because the people running are always sinful human beings, like us, and the parties are sinful human institutions, but God's priorities should be our priorities. Don't vote until you've looked at one of these voter guides.

Which brings up another important point to remember about this and every election. Don't expect human beings to solve your problems. Some polices are better than others and should be supported and implemented, but until Jesus comes none will be perfect. Beware of anyone who promises to solve all your problems. Until Jesus comes, none will. Some think that if we only get the right people elected our problems will all be over. Are you kidding me? "In this world you will have trouble!" Jesus said, "But take heart, I've overcome the world!" Don't put your hope in government or in politicians. Put your hope in Jesus and keep it there!

Which brings up our next most important point. Newsflash: Regardless of who's elected next month, God is still in control! He is still on the throne of the universe. He is still sovereign over the affairs of men, nations, and world. Use your God-given blood-earned right to vote but even if and when elections don't elect the people we voted for, trust in God. Even now as we approach the election, let's remember that. If your person isn't chosen, is it possible God may have bigger plans and sees a bigger picture? We must allow Him to rule and overrule.

The Bible tells us to, “fear not” 365 times, one for each day of the year, including election day! We aren’t electing someone to rule the universe, that position is already permanently filled. And it’s filled by someone who loves you! Who has the power and ability to keep you safe. We may endure hardships in this life. Our brothers and sisters in China, North Korea, Iran, Venezuela and other repressive countries are enduring persecution even now. Our forebears in Germany and the former Soviet Union and even the Roman Empire endured many hardships. But God never left them nor forsook them. Nor will He you if you are His child.

I’ve heard that some can’t sleep at night worrying about who’s going to be elected. Oh my friends, trust in the **Lord** with all your heart and lean not on the polls. Or on pundits. Or on politicians. David was a man with a lot he could worry about. He was king! He had a lot of problems and a lot of enemies! And In Psalm 4:8 he says, “I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.” Trust in God and God alone! Don’t let the enemy steal your peace! Of all US citizens, Christians should be the most at peace! Regardless of who wins or loses, regardless even of the type of government. How many times in the Sermon on the Mount did Jesus say, “Don’t worry.”

We’ve looked before at Paul’s advice in Philippians 4:6 “Don’t worry about anything, instead pray about everything!” Say everything. Everything includes elections. It includes schools and inflation. It includes the economy and your children’s future. He doesn’t say not to be concerned about these things, he says pray about them! Entrust them to the One who works all things together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose, regardless of who wins the election!

Our passage today commands us to pray, intercede and give thanks for all those in authority. This is good, and pleases God our Savior. You may not like the president, but you are **commanded** to pray for him or her. You may not like the governor, but you are **commanded** to pray for him or her. You may consider them your enemies. Jesus said love and pray for your enemies. It was the government that crucified Jesus, and yet His disciples tell us to pray for those in government. Pray for those who are there and pray for God to rise up the leaders of His choosing. Pray for godly leaders and for God to bless, guide, and protect those serving who are godly. You think it’s hard to be a Christian where you live and work? Imagine doing it in DC, in Congress, in the courts, in the White House. Pray for all our leaders but especially for those who are brothers and sisters in Jesus. When you do, you please God! You put a smile on His face!

We are to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. There’s that word we talked about last week. Say holiness. Don’t let your political fervor overshadow your Christianity, your Christlike love. We can and must call out sin, but we are also to

love sinners. Before we are democrats or republicans, we are to be Christians! Let's not hate someone just because they don't think, act, or vote like we do. Even if they disagree about all the issues. Even if they say bad things about us or the policies or the candidates we support. Love them anyway! They too are made in God's image and we are not to hate anyone. Jesus said in Matt 5:22, "... anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." Or you jerk, or whatever. It poisons us and our witness for Jesus. Resist the temptation to hate, insult, and demean others. I'm preaching to myself as well. Our leader is not Harris, not Trump, He is King Jesus! Let's be careful to keep our head and our mouth and our witness pure for Him.

Which brings us to the part of our Scripture that reminds us of our theme this year which is the Great what? Vs 4 says, "... God our Savior, ... wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time." Does God want some people **not** to be saved, some Democrats or some Republicans? Not according to the Bible! He wants all to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth! Who is the truth? Jesus! The mediator, the ransom, the testimony!

Some people get all excited about their political candidate and don't mind encouraging people to vote for that person but won't ever tell anyone about Jesus! I heard someone this week say that if people know us more as a Democrat or a Republican than as a Christian, we've got our priorities mixed up! And we do! I'm not saying don't get involved in politics, but I am saying get involved in evangelism! Whoever is elected will only serve 4 or 8 years at most but Jesus will reign forever! If someone gets saved, they'll live forever! In the best economic conditions, with the best freedoms, with the most perfect peace and joy ever! **That** kingdom is open to all and God wants all to be a part of it! Join His party! Apply for citizenship in His Kingdom and encourage everyone you know to do the same. Use the tracts in your bulletin today to help you do so! Who America Needs! Or at least leave it laying somewhere someone will pick it up and read it!

Some people have dual citizenship. They are a citizen of the US and of some other country. I don't know how all that works, but I do know how dual citizenship in heaven works. It's free for us but it cost Jesus His life. Confess and turn from your sins and ask Jesus to save you and when He does, you become a citizen of heaven! You're living in exile right now on earth and so in the meantime do as much good in this country as you can, but remember where you're eventually moving to! It gives you a real freedom to know no matter who's elected, no matter what the government does or doesn't do, no one and nothing can take your heavenly citizenship from you. It's guaranteed by the blood of Jesus. And we shouldn't let them take our joy either for we know the end of the story! If you never have, join His Kingdom today. If you have,

worship Him for it and ask Him who you should vote for and who you should share Jesus with this week.