



Biblical Voting Guidelines

Voting is a great responsibility, and an opportunity to express our Christian values at the ballot box. It is a way for us to help shape the governing and order of our society and gives each person a voice in the process. The United States is one of the few countries in the world where politicians are still beholden to the voter, and elected leaders have a large influence on their citizen's ability to thrive or suffer. (Romans 13:1, Proverbs 28:12, Proverbs 29:2)

As Christians, how should we prepare to vote?

- 1. Pray.** Nothing of any consequence happens without prayer. In our own church, we know prayer has brought us new pastors, direction for our future, and a humility that allows us to acknowledge that Jesus is at the steering wheel. Pray for all our leaders, regardless of your personal feelings for them. Pray for our government, both locally and nationally. Pray for the city of Boise and the city you live in, that God would radically transform and turn people toward Him. Pray that God would give you discernment as you consider the issues. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)
- 2. Base your vote on Biblical truth.** Learn what the Bible says about the issues. The Bible should inform our choices and thinking about how to vote regarding candidate's convictions on topics like abortion (Exodus 20:13), sexual identity (Genesis 1:26-27), and immigrants (Joshua 1:10-11, Psalm 146:9, Leviticus 19:33-34, Numbers 32:17, Matthew 25:35)
- 3. Discernment.** Not every issue is black and white. Voting for a candidate means voting for his or her knowledge, experience and positions on issues, but it also means voting for the party platform that candidate represents. Not every decision is clear-cut. *"Discernment is not a matter of telling the difference between right and wrong,"* said Charles Spurgeon. *"Rather it is telling the difference between right and almost right."* Jim Daly writes, *"We get discernment by reading the Bible. As the old saying goes, 'When I open my Bible, God opens His mouth.' We grow in wisdom by getting down on our knees, by praying and developing our relationship with the wisest of all. We learn by reading good books, by heeding the counsel of Christian sages and other people we love and trust. We test what we're told against what God has communicated to us through the Bible and our lives."* (Hebrews 5:14, Romans 12:2)
- 4. Vote based on what is best for the common good.** Sometimes this means voting contrary to your personal preferences if you believe the outcome would benefit the majority of people (Philippians 2:3-4). We should carefully consider each item on the ballot for what is in the best interest of the whole. Ultimately, what is best for the whole in the city, state or country benefits everyone, including yourself. (Jeremiah 29:7) Dr. Os Guinness observed, *"The genius of America, the biblical experiment, is its ordered freedom. It's freedom within a covenant. Freedom requires truth. Freedom requires character. Freedom requires a way of life knowing how we live together freely. That's the biblical way — ordered freedom."*

5. **Know that God is in control.** As you fast and pray before the election, remind yourself that God is in control. He is the One who institutes leaders and gives them authority (Daniel 2:21; Romans 13:1). Whatever the outcome, we can trust that it will ultimately be used for His good purposes (Romans 8:28).

6. **Commit to voting!** The way we interact with others and discuss political topics should reflect our relationship with Jesus. As difficult as it may seem with voting, the fruits of the Spirit should be evidence of our transformed lives in Christ (Gal. 5:22-23). Ultimately, Christians can *significantly impact* an election by making an effort to cast votes, especially after careful thought and consideration of the candidates and issues.

Pew Research reported that over 30% of younger people didn't vote in the last election. Recent data showed that over 40 million Christians don't vote. That would be like the population of California NOT voting, a state that holds great sway over election results. If you aren't able to get out and vote, ask your county clerk for an absentee ballot, so you can vote from home and mail it in. The deadline to request and receive it is October 25, 2024. Do whatever you can to vote!

Praying and voting with you,

The Pastors and Elders of Living Hope Bible Church

You may find some of the links to websites below helpful in your research.

Focus on the Family <https://dailycitizen.focusonthefamily.com/>

Idaho Family Policy Center <https://idahofamily.org/>

Ligonier Ministries <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/transgenderism>

World Relief <https://worldrelief.org/dublog-a-biblical-perspective-on-immigration/>

Ada County (voter registration and absentee voting) <https://adacounty.id.gov/elections/election-day-information/>

Canyon County (voter registration and absentee voting) <https://elections.canyoncounty.id.gov/>

Democratic Party platform <https://democrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FINAL-MASTER-PLATFORM.pdf>

Republican Party platform <https://www.gop.com/press-release/icymi-rnc-platform-committee-adopts-2024-republican-party-platform/>