

Voting with our Faith in Mind

On what criteria do Christians base their voting decisions?

- Life experiences?
- Sunday school or small group discussions?
- Common sense?
- The Bible?

Christians who vote based on their understanding of the whole Bible might evaluate a candidate through the lenses of the Christian principles below:

1. The earth is God's good creation (Genesis 1). We are stewards of creation.
2. God has created humanity in the divine image (Genesis 1:27). We are to foster the dignity and rights of all peoples and the sanctity of life.
3. The state was created to serve human welfare (Romans 13:4). We are to call upon the state to serve its more noble purposes.
4. In Jesus Christ, God has revealed a way of peace, nonviolence, justice and reconciliation (Matthew 5). We are to live in the way of peace and justice.
5. All human reality has "fallen" from God's purpose (Romans 8:22-23). We are to live in that creative tension of being "in" the world, but not "of" the world.
6. The church, as a signpost of God's reign, is the primary arena for Christian "politics" (1 Peter 2:9). We are to be the church, an alternative community or polis.
7. God's mission is for and within the world (John 3:16). We are to engage the world reflecting God's compassion.
8. God has compassion for the most vulnerable in the world (Proverbs 31:8-9). We are to welcome the stranger and seek economic justice for the poor and the marginalized in society.
9. Security is in God (Psalm 146:1-6). We are to place our ultimate trust in God.
10. God's reign transcends peoples and nations (Revelation 7:9). We are first and foremost citizens of God's rule.

Voting with our Faith in Mind, continued

The principles on the other side were outlined by Leo Hartshorn, minister of peace and justice for Mennonite Mission Network, in an October 2004 *PeaceSigns* article:
<http://peace.mennolink.org/cgi-bin/m.pl?a=126>

Studying and prayerfully evaluating candidates and their views on a wide variety of topics is time consuming. However, it doesn't take long to realize that no candidate will bring about God's kingdom on earth. That's not the job of government – that's God's job. The church is here to proclaim that some government laws and policies – and the candidates and politicians who pass them – bring more justice and peace and some bring much less. That's the goal of voting in a democratic society.

Here are resources to help you gather biblical voting information:

- Mennonite Central Committee, Congressional Voting Record:
<http://www.mcc.org/us/washington/advocate/votingrecord.pdf>
- Sojourners, Voting All Your Values:
http://www.sojo.net/action/alerts/VOP_voter-guide.pdf
- "Guiding principles for Christian political engagement" by Leo Hartshorn (PeaceSigns, Oct 2004):
<http://peace.mennolink.org/cgi-bin/m.pl?a=126>
- National Council of Churches:
<http://www.nccusa.org/electionyearprinciplesguide.html>
- National Association of Evangelicals:
http://www.nae.net/images/civic_responsibility.pdf