



"We are called to an everlasting preoccupation with God."
—A.W. Tozer

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Why We Do Not Vote

In America, where the political process is proudly hailed as free and democratic, it is considered somehow "un-American" not to vote whenever the polling stations open. Over the years, this right of citizenship has become a duty in the eyes of many. In fact, no less than Jerry Falwell writes in an email newsletter just this week, "I believe it is inexcusable for Christians to fail to vote during an election." Is it really?

Scholars would place the Church of the Great [God](#) into a category called "apostolic" or "primitive" Christianity. Essentially, apostolic Christianity aims to follow the doctrines and practices of the first-century church as recorded in the Bible. Additions, subtractions, and traditions of denominations since the close of the scriptural record mean little or nothing unless the Bible itself indicates they would be acceptable.

Voting by Christians is one of such modern practices that has to face muster before God's Word. The determination is made harder because no record of Christians voting for any reason is found in the New Testament. Thus, the judgment must rely on principles derived from what *is* said.

Perhaps the clearest principle concerning this knotty problem appears in [Philippians 3:20](#): "For our citizenship is in heaven." If a person's citizenship is in Bolivia, by law he cannot vote in American elections, or for that matter, in any country's elections other than Bolivia's. Even so, a Christian who is a citizen of heaven should not vote in an election of a nation on earth.

[II Corinthians 5:20](#) adds another principle: "We are [ambassadors for Christ](#)." Paul is specifically speaking of Christian ministers (see [Ephesians 6:20](#)), but the principle applies to all Christians, since those Christ has called are to be emissaries for Him before [the world](#) ([Matthew 5:13-16](#); [Philippians 2:15](#); [II Peter 2:11-12](#); etc.). If the ambassador from Mozambique were to meddle in the affairs of the United States, even by merely trying to vote, he would be in violation of international law. In the same way, a Christian, an ambassador of Christ's government, cannot interfere in the affairs of another sovereign nation.

[Jesus](#) Himself provides a third principle in [John 17:16](#): "They [His disciples, Christians] are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." When God calls a person to [repentance](#) and conversion, the new Christian is summoned to forsake his former allegiances and throw his hand in with Christ. We see in the apostle Paul that he considered everything before his conversion to be rubbish; his loyalty was fixed entirely with Christ from that point on ([Philippians 3:3-11](#)). If an American renounces his citizenship and takes citizenship in another country, he is no longer allowed to vote in American elections—it is not his country. A true Christian must treat his citizenship in the same manner; he is truly "not of this world" but of the [Kingdom of God](#) ([Colossians 1:13](#); see also [John 15:19](#); [18:36](#); [James 4:4](#); [Revelation 18:4](#)).

Finally, Paul advances another principle in [Ephesians 6:12](#): "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against . . . spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places" (see also [II Corinthians 10:3-6](#)). Put simply, the political battles of this nation are not our fight! Christians are interlopers if they interfere in this world's problems. God has called Christians as soldiers in a battle against *spiritual* evils; their struggle is on an entirely different plane ([II Timothy 2:4](#); see [Luke 8:14](#))! To get involved in the affairs of this world

would distract a Christian from focusing on what God has commanded him to do: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" ([Matthew 6:33](#)).

Though we may yearn to right the wrongs of this country and to see righteousness prevail in the government, our hope is not in any nation of men but in God and the soon-coming establishment of His [Kingdom on earth](#). Our job is to redouble our efforts to hasten that day by plunging into the fight against spiritual evil and overcoming it in our lives ([II Peter 3:11-12](#)).

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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[Politics and Christ's Return](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

In the church, we are not politically liberal, conservative, or moderate—we are "God-ists." The world considers us liberals because we are not bound by its religious orthodoxy. Conversely, we are conservative when following God's constitutional code, His holy standards, living by the spirit of the law rather than just by the letter. Ultimately, religion and politics do not mix at all because in weak men, political expediency trumps righteousness every time. Because we are set apart by God, we are not to become involved in the world's political, judicial, or military systems. Our term in office has not yet begun.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Why Should Christians Refuse Jury Duty?](#)

by Staff

For years, the church has taught that Christians should refuse jury duty. Why? What are the biblical reasons for this? This article explains why we should not judge the world at this time.

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