

EXCERPT

Chapter One: Do Jesus and Politics Mix?

But Peter and John replied,

“Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God.”

–Acts 4:19, NIV

Jesus and politics. They do not mix. Or so we have been told.

Jesus is certainly above politics. The question is, would He have His followers be involved in the political process? On the one hand, we should not put our trust in princes. Syndicated columnist Cal Thomas likes to point out that salvation will not come on Air Force One. Fair enough.

Erwin Lutzer, an author and pastor, reminds us that the Cross can accomplish things politics cannot. I agree completely and invest most of my time in evangelism and discipleship. On the other hand, I also believe we must be involved in the political process.

There’s no question conservative Christianity is important in politics. In the wake of the 2006 elections, some “progressive” leaders among the Republicans blamed the religious Right for Democrat gains. Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family shot back: “Values voters are not going to carry the water for the Republican Party if it ignores their deeply held convictions and beliefs.”

Dobson warned the Republican leadership to think twice before it abandoned “their pro-moral, pro-family and pro-life base.”

Meanwhile, a November 2006 poll shows that fewer Christians trust the GOP as faith-friendly: “The number of people who consider the GOP friendly to religion dropped from 55 percent to 47 percent.”³ In November 2006, *Newsweek* magazine devoted a cover story to “The Politics of Jesus,” while a February 2007 editorial in *Time* magazine shouted “The Religious Right’s Era Is Over.”⁵ The same month, Christian Newswire declared that evangelicals are the nation’s single largest voting bloc.⁶ Even Hillary Clinton, who in 2001 said, “I wonder if it’s possible to be a Republican and a Christian at the same time,”⁷ recently hired an evangelical consultant to build bridges between her and the faith community.

Any way you look at it, Jesus and politics are a hot topic.

FEAR OF THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT

A former writer for the *New York Times*, Christopher Hedges, wrote a book titled *American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America*.

In a recent commentary about the book, Don Feder, an orthodox Jew, said, Hedges’ screed is the latest in a long, long, line of hysterical tracts denouncing what the secular left calls the Religious Right. The past year alone has seen such saliva-specked exposés of alleged

Christian extremism as:

Religion Gone Bad: Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right by Mel White

Why the Christian Right Is Wrong by Robin Meyers

The Left Hand of God: Taking Back Our Country from the Religious Right by Michael Lerner

Theocons: Secular America Under Siege by Damon Linker

American Theocracy by Kevin Phillips

The Baptizing of America: The Religious Right's Plan for the Rest of Us by James Rudin

Piety and Politics: The Right Wing Assault on Religious Freedom by the Reverend Barry Lynn and

Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism by Michelle Goldberg.

The objective of all of this Chicken Little squawking is to convince us that the Constitution is falling—that conservative Christians intend to abolish the Bill of Rights, outlaw sin and replace democracy with a theocratic state that will make Calvin's Geneva look like Hugh Hefner's bachelor party....

Hedges quotes evangelist [D. James] Kennedy: "As vice regents of God, we are to exercise godly dominion and influence over our neighborhoods, our schools, our government" and "our entertainment media, our news media, our scientific endeavors...."

How successful the religious right has been in exercising "godly dominion" over the news media and Hollywood may be seen by picking up the *New York Times*, tuning in to *CNN* or *NPR* or experiencing the torrent of sex and violence (not to mention the ubiquitous attacks on Christianity) in movies shown every evening on cable television.

Kennedy and his colleagues are saying that Christians have a right and a duty to bring their values into the political arena. Shocking!

So here we are in an interesting place. Many in this country, it seems, would prefer that evangelical Christians remain absent from the political process. And yet, for the last decade or so, many Christians, including myself, have taken an active stand in politics, giving the other side plenty to be upset about.

Are Christians really to blame for the problems facing our nation today? Perhaps an analogy

THE CASE OF DR. FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER

We all are aware of the alarming statistics being generated across our nation.

epidemic crime

plummeting educational achievement

pornography infiltrating our homes, even those of some pastors

the breakdown of the family

widespread acceptance of immorality

Clearly, our society is in a great need of a true awakening. I believe it is our only real hope.

What happened along the way from Plymouth Rock to the present? Who is responsible? Was it the atheists? the humanists? the secularists? the communists? the cultists? the New Agers? the hedonists?

the ACLU? NOW? the People for the American Way?

Let me tell you a story. You remember it, I am sure. Just imagine, if you will, that final scene in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* when the monster has gone berserk and has wreaked havoc upon the townspeople. He's left scores of people dead, and now he's coming after his maker. He's destroyed his home, and the whole thing is now ablaze and setting the sky alight.

Imagine that, just then, a friend of Frankenstein arrives from a distant city and sees the carnage and the chaos and asks, "Dr. Frankenstein, what has happened here?"

"A monster, a monster!" says the doctor.

The friend is confused. "What are you talking about?"

"A monster did this. It was terrible! He went berserk, killing people and destroying my home!"

"A monster? Where in the world did it come from?"

Silence.

"Dr. Frankenstein? Where did the monster come from?"

The doctor's face falls. "I...I created it. I made it myself."

In case you do not see the application, my friend, we have to acknowledge that a great deal of the blame for the state of the nation must fall upon *us*. It must be placed at the doorstep of the church. We have failed to obey the Great Commission in this country. We have failed to obey our cultural mandate to be involved in every sphere of social activity. We have retreated from politics, from social involvement, from the media, and from higher education.

Now chaos has broken loose, and we look at the scene before us with horror. We may not have created this monster with our own hands, but we have allowed it to grow and take power. With the power of the government, the colleges, the courts, the legislatures, and the media, it has wreaked this disaster—this carnage in America today. Christians have failed to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens in this country, and we have allowed this great blessing of a godly nation to slip through our hands.

WHAT PARTY DOES GOD CLAIM?

What side is God on? People have wanted to know that since the beginning of warfare. During the Civil War, people wondered which side God was on. Initially many pastors and their congregations were duped by Adolf Hitler. Journalist and historian William L. Shirer, author of *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, notes that some German "Christians" even drew up a resolution (which ultimately was not adopted) demanding "One People, One Reich, One Faith," and these same professing believers wanted to require "all pastors to take an oath of allegiance to Hitler."

Surely, God did not approve of Hitler's anti-Jewish, anti-Christian, anti-freedom regime. In the book of Joshua, the title character has an encounter with God, or more precisely, the Son of God: Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" (Joshua 5:13—14, NIV)

Interpreting this passage, we know it was Jesus because of the parallel in Revelation 1. Line up the two passages, and you find even some of the same phrases applied to the divine man with the sword who appeared in both cases (further, whenever men attempted to worship an angel, the angel would rebuke them). Joshua asks Jesus, "Are you on our side?" much the same way we ask today, "Lord, are you on our side or theirs?" And how does Jesus answer? "Neither." In some versions the word is translated "No." He is not on anybody's side. Jesus said that He was the commander—Joshua's captain and the Lord of the battle. He commands not only His people but the days of all people and the host of heaven as well.

We want to vote "correctly," but how do we know the right way to vote—the Christian way to vote? Throughout history, many people have been burned by thinking their party was right. There was even a so-called Christian party in Nazi Germany when virtually the whole country jumped on the bandwagon. These professing Christians dared to align the name of Jesus Christ with Adolf Hitler's diabolical goals.

Jesus goes on to explain to Joshua that he will be victorious if he obeys the Lord and does what he is commanded to do. The question, therefore, is not if God is on our side, but rather, *are we on God's side?*

You may recall that Abraham Lincoln said as much during the Civil War. In 1863 he overheard someone say that he hoped "the Lord was on the Union's side." The president responded: "I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

Does God care how we cast our ballot? I believe the answer is yes. For many years Christians have abstained from politics, and now they are shocked that the culture around them has deteriorated. Certainly, we should not rely solely on political power to right the world's wrongs. All politicians are human. Even the best of them will disappoint. Yet how would Jesus have us vote? When Jesus was on earth, He did not reside in a democratic republic and had no opportunity to cast a ballot. Meanwhile, those of us who make following Him our first priority believe He has spoken through His Word and given us principles that can inform us on how to vote on many issues.

The purpose of this book is to explore those biblical principles from which we can draw political implications. Does the Bible say anything about how we are to educate our young? Does it say anything about abortion or capital punishment? Does it say anything about war or how we are to vote on the environment, immigration, or health care? Sincere Christians may have different views on how to tackle these issues. However, I trust that we have grace enough to respect Christians on either side of the partisan aisle.

In this book, we will begin by looking at the broader question of whether the Bible and politics can—and should—mix. I believe that they do. Jesus said we are to “render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Luke 20:25).

Furthermore, we are called to be salt and light, which has political implications. After exploring the Bible and politics, we will examine the critical issues of our nation and look for guidance from the Bible. This discussion will include many of the issues currently tearing us apart as a society.

Some may quibble that we should look only at what Jesus said as opposed to the whole Bible. Yet Jesus put His seal of approval on the Old Testament as the Word of God, saying, for example, “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35) and “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17—18). Not one jot or tittle—much less a word, a sentence, or an entire prophetic book—should be ignored. He said that if people would not believe Moses and the prophets (that is, the Old Testament), then they wouldn’t believe if someone (that is, Himself) came back from the dead (see Luke 16:31).

Jesus commissioned the writing of the New Testament to record His In John 16, Jesus told those He sent (the apostles):

I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. (John 16:12—15)

It was by His authority that the apostles wrote His words and further revelation. Nothing was accepted in the New Testament except that which clearly had apostolic authority.¹² The whole Bible, not just the words of Jesus, was given *by God*: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16—17). When we ask, “How would Jesus have us vote?” we are actually asking, “How would the Bible have us vote?”

There are certainly some people in our time who make Jesus out to be something He was not and who convert Him into many things.

Though He clearly taught against any violation of God’s law, many people prefer to make Jesus into their own image without a shred of evidence. John Calvin once observed that the human heart is a factory of idols. The triune God detests all idolatry. The Jesus of the Bible is the Jesus with whom we have to deal, like it or not.

So let us humbly search the Scriptures to see if God has something to say on the political issues that are tearing apart our nation. Let us do so with the great motto sometimes attributed to Augustine, other times to Blaise Pascal: “In essentials, unity. In nonessentials, liberty. And in all things, charity.”

“JESUS IS A LIBERAL”

Recently I saw a bumper sticker that said “Jesus is a liberal.” This reminds me of a liberal seminarian who told one of my church members, “God is a conservative, but Jesus is a liberal.” When the seminarian was challenged, he stammered a lot. He forgot that “Jesus” is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “Joshua,” and Joshua was the Old Testament conquering hero whom God raised up to clear the land of the Canaanite people because their sin was so great that they had reached a point of no return. As Joshua was a liberator, so Jesus is the true liberator who saves those who trust in Him from their sins (including Joshua, who was looking forward to Him). In short, contrary to our seminary friend, there is continuity from the Old through the New Testament. Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it.

Despite people’s remakings of Him, Jesus was Semitic. He was a firstcentury Jew. He was not white, not black, not communist, not homosexual—not feminist, as one of Dan Brown’s characters says in *The Da Vinci Code*. Certainly, Jesus cared about women, but He was not a feminist the way many would define feminism today. We have to deal with Jesus as He *is*, as we find Him in Scripture, not as we want Him to be.

CONSERVATIVE VS. LIBERAL

What is a conservative? What is a liberal? Are we talking about those who only want the status quo as opposed to those who desire liberty through new ways of thinking? One man expressed it this way: “A conservative believes you are best qualified to take care of you and your family. A liberal believes the government is best qualified to take care of you and your family.”

Someone else said that if you want to make a conservative, it is easy: just give him something to conserve. I think we need to go beyond labels. To me, more important than being a conservative or a liberal is being a committed Christian. When I vote, do I please Jesus with my vote? One example comes to mind: how could He be pleased if I vote in a way that promotes the destruction of innocent human life? If a politician does not get the issues of life and death right, how is he going to get the other things right? It is sort of like a Christian theologian who does not have a correct view of the Trinity. If that is messed up, chances are good he will also get other areas of theology incorrect.

ARE WE LOSING GROUND?

Several years ago I had lunch with a missionary who had been in South America for a good many years. He said to me, in effect, “On my rare returns to the States, I see that there is an apparent evangelical awakening—a revival of sorts—superchurches, tremendous television and radio ministries, great crusades and conferences, and thousands of people coming out to them.

How is it that I still see the whole moral fiber of the country continuing to slip? Why is there still the increasing pornography, the increasing ungodliness in the laws that are passed, and the unconcern for human life?”

The problem is that, though there are many Christians in this country, though we can say that about 36 percent of adults claim they have had a conversion experience,¹⁴ and though that number is growing, it

is still a minority. It just so happens that evangelical Christians are generally not making the laws in the Congress; they are not the ones running our television networks; they are not the ones printing pornographic material—or allowing the laws that permit it. Though Christianity may be growing in this country, it is still far from being the controlling force.

Have you ever wondered why even though so many Americans claim to be Christians, we seem to wield little influence in our culture? A recent study by LifeWay has found that many Christians and pastors are out of touch with the current culture.¹⁵ We have much less political might than our numbers would suggest. Our beliefs and morals are often held up to ridicule and attacked in the media and on university and college campuses.

You would think we were a small group of extremists, hanging on for dear life. This is hardly the image of “more than conquerors” that’s often promoted in churches.

How often have you heard the assertion that politics and religion do not mix? Or “you can’t legislate morality”? These kinds of statements are repeated so often that many people take them as gospel. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. observed, “Even though morality cannot be legislated, behavior can be regulated. While the law cannot change the heart, it can certainly restrain the heartless.”

The very nature of legislation involves value judgments. Some things are deemed right and legal; other things are wrong and illegal. That is morality. I believe the question is not *if* morality can be legislated. The question is *whose* morality will be legislated?

In the political realm, we have been commanded by Christ to give Caesar what is Caesar’s. Yet many Christians in America do not even bother to vote. In the area of the mainstream media, we seem to have very little influence.

How about the law? Imagine an evangelical judge being appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Say, for instance, Roy S. Moore, the so-called Ten Commandments Judge, was appointed. It would stir up such intense opposition that the character of such a judge would be besmirched from coast to coast. The hearings on Capitol Hill would make past hearings (like those that swirled around John Ashcroft when he was nominated for attorney general) seem like just another day in Washington. Why are Christians so routinely maligned? Why are we so ineffective in legislating our morality? I believe we have traded the historic, traditional image of the sovereign Conqueror for a pale and meek buddy. We place our religion in our back pocket to take out when we need some comfort.

Too many professing believers have a weak view of God, seeing Jesus as Lord of their individual lives and not as Lord of the nations. Christ may one day be enthroned as king over the whole earth, the One before whom each of us will stand, but this is far from us.

The Armenians have a beautiful phrase: “Christ, only Christ.” These were the last words of thousands of Armenian Christians early in the twentieth century. During history’s bloodiest century—an era when many nations tried to dethrone God and substitute a man-worshiping totalitarian state in His place—there were many massacres, the most notable being the Holocaust. One of the first massacres in the twentieth century was of hundreds of thousands of Armenian Christians at the hands of Muslim Turks. The

estimates vary from six hundred thousand to over one million who were slaughtered. The Turks went through Christian villages in Armenia, lined up all the residents, and asked them one question: “Christ or Mohammed”? If the Christians chose Christ, they were bayoneted to death. Many of the Armenians not only chose Jesus, but they did so with the phrase “Christ, only Christ.”

It is a good phrase, for He is the Sovereign One. He is the One with whom we all have to do. He is God’s inescapable imperative. Would that more Christians recognized His sovereignty and the implications that Christ the King is enthroned on high.

JESUS IS NOT ON THE BALLOT

When Jesus Christ finished His earthly ministry, He ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of God the Father. I believe it was then His kingdom began (although, of course, it has not come in fullness). Colossians 1:13 tells us that we have been born into His kingdom, which, by implication, *has* begun (past tense). Hebrews 1:8 tells us that Jesus’s throne is forever.

More than five hundred years before Jesus was born, Daniel said this about the coming Savior: I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

(Daniel 7:13—14)

No wonder King Herod tried to kill Jesus while He was just a baby. No wonder the Roman authorities, some thirty-three years later, crucified Him for the “crime” of being the “King of the Jews.” But Jesus is not on the ballot. The mistake in history (what we could call “the medieval mistake”) is trying to impose His kingdom on others by force. To this day Islam is guilty of this error. Some professing Christians are guilty of this error today too (abortion-clinic bombers come to mind), but they are far and away the exception.

Since Jesus is not on the ballot, then no one who is perfect is on the ballot. That means we have to pick a sinner (or a list of sinners) whenever we cast a ballot. I suppose there are times when a Christian cannot in good conscience cast a ballot, but that is rare. What can we say for those Christians living in totalitarian regimes? On the other hand, we should have no excuse in a representative democracy like America. Even though Jesus is the “Ruler of the nations,” it is not up to Christians to try to bring in His kingdom by force. When people in times past attempted to usher in Christ’s kingdom, they failed. No human being can usher in the millennium. Not Constantine. Not Pope Gregory the Great. Not Justinian. Not Charlemagne. Not John Calvin. Not John Winthrop. Not Oliver Cromwell. Not Abraham Kuyper. Not Ronald Reagan. The kingdom of Christ will not be fully realized on planet Earth until God decides to convert and transform more and more enemies of Jesus. But that does not mean that between now and the time when Christ comes *in fullness* we can’t experience at least partially the effects of His kingdom. “This universe is at war,” observed C. S. Lewis. “It is a civil war, a rebellion, and... we are living in a part of the universe occupied by the rebel.”¹⁷ And

herein lies the tension. We Christians, individually and corporately, can actually make a difference as to how much of our world is occupied by Christ versus how much is occupied by the devil.

We, the loyal subjects of Christ the King, can make a huge difference for good or evil in this world. We have the opportunity by our beliefs and actions to help shape the future for generations to come, until such a time as Christ once and for all ushers in His kingdom. We may be here for a short time or a long haul. In either event, it's unarguable—whatever your view of the end times—that we should be faithful in Christ's service until the time He returns (as alluded to in Luke 19:13).

When we consider how difficult are the times in which we live or how rampant evil seems to be, step back for a moment and reflect on how bad things once were. Christ was not born into a perfect world. In two thousand years the Christian faith has helped make vast changes in our world.

Theologian Lorraine Boettner observed, "Today we are living in an era that is relatively golden as compared with the first century of the Christian era. This progress is to go on until on this earth we shall see a practical fulfillment of the prayer, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."¹⁹ For example, human beings are not slaughtered for sport as were the gladiators. The world at the time was *far* worse than it is today. Yet it's painfully obvious we have much further to go.

A THEOCRACY?

Modern secularists often accuse the religious Right of calling for a theocracy in America. Despite these claims, I am *not* advocating a theocracy. I am only trying to restore the truth that Christianity is, and always has been, a fundamental component in the marketplace of ideas. Throughout history, there has been only one theocracy, and that was the state of Israel in the time of the Old Testament. God alone ruled then. There was no legislature. The Sanhedrin was simply a supreme court. There was but one lawgiver.

That system of law stopped with the destruction of Israel, ending the only theocracy in history. I would not have America reinstitute the Old Testament civil and legal systems to replace our governmental legislation. Those laws are merely a guide to the kinds of laws that civil governments should form today. I do believe that the laws of every nation should be in harmony, not with the civil laws of the Old Testament, but at least with the moral laws of the Ten Commandments.

Jesus lived under that theocracy, but His death and the subsequent dispersal of Israel brought an end to it. By His Spirit working through the early church, it is very clear that He did not mean to perpetuate the theocratic system throughout the whole world. Even at the first council at Jerusalem, they said, "We had a system of laws that we ourselves could not bear, and now we should not try to impose this on the Gentile world" (see Acts 15:10). I believe the church has been acting in accordance with Christ, as He revealed His will through His Spirit to the early church.

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH

I said earlier that modern Christianity is less effective than it could be. I want to explore that further. Indeed, why is much of modern Christianity so impotent? Answer: a deficient view of Christ the King, a view that compartmentalizes our religious life and assigns it artificial boundaries, as opposed to the

kingdom of God, which is like yeast that works its way through the whole dough.

Compare, for instance, the number of those who claim to be born again Christians with those who profess to be homosexuals. The most scientific study to date on sex in America, conducted in the early 1990s under the auspices of the University of Chicago, found that only 2.8 percent of men identified themselves as homosexual or bisexual and only 1.4 percent of women.²¹ Contrast that number with those who claim to be born again. George Gallup Jr. reports that 40 percent of Americans claim to be born again. He also reports a more conservative figure of 20 percent who claim to be born again based on a threefold criteria: they have accepted Jesus Christ; they believe the Bible is the Word of God, which we should obey; and they believe we should somehow share our faith. Let us suppose the latter number is correct. You are still talking about a large group of people. This is not taking into account the fact that 78 percent of Americans identify themselves as Christians. For the sake of our argument, let us use Gallup's conservative figure. Even at that, there are nearly ten Christians to every homosexual or lesbian.

Would casual observers of our culture know this? Would they realize it in terms of the political influence of Christians versus homosexuals? Would they know it if they visited a college campus? Would they recognize these things if they read one of the country's daily newspapers? How about the national media? We have the numbers. We have the millions. Most important, we have hope. C. S. Lewis said this about hope: "Hope... means... a continual looking forward to the eternal world.... It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next.... It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.

"Aim at Heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in'; aim at earth and you will get neither."

We must always hope for change and work to influence the world for the better and for the good of the world to come. However, a strong argument for a privatized faith can be made by pointing to what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: that we should not do our holy deeds to be seen by men but that we should pray in private and fast discreetly and give anonymously. That teaching about private faith certainly applies on an individual level, but it does not apply to how we are to serve God by serving our country. We cannot claim this passage as an excuse to shirk our God-given civic duty. Some Christians argue to keep faith private, lest we flaunt our righteousness on street corners, but in reality they lack courage, fearing public rejection or an inability to defend their beliefs and political views from a spiritual basis. Maybe they are too familiar with the kind of scorn heaped on Jerry Falwell even in the days after his death in May 2007.

People will disagree about how Christian morality should inform public policy. But knowing that political views always derive from an internal morality, we must make it our duty to declare publicly what we believe. It is my hope that this book will help you do that.

CONCLUSION

So can anyone be so bold as to say how Jesus would vote? I think the answer is yes. He left us all sorts of commands and principles to follow. Obviously, there is ambiguity in some of those principles; otherwise Christian history would not be full of sincere, well-meaning Christians fighting over those

principles, over doctrine. Human pride is a huge factor in such fights. Just as Jesus dealt with religious Pharisees and secular minded Sadducees, so we contend with both in our time. In declaring Christian principles that guide voting, we cannot help but be controversial. Others will disagree. It goes with the territory. But unless we risk offending, we cannot uphold our duty to God. John Calvin once said, "The task of the church is to make the invisible reign of Christ visible." As we submit to His reign more and more in our lives, and we compromise less and less with the world, we will see powerful results in our land.

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