

Voting is one way we practice *love* *of neighbor*

Before casting your ballot, take time to look beyond campaign slogans, party labels, and political personalities. Ask not only, “What matters to me?” but also, “How will my vote affect my neighbors?”

Jesus said: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” —Matthew 22:37–39

No candidate or political party perfectly represents the will of God. Our ultimate hope does not rest in an election, a government, or a political leader. Our hope is in Jesus Christ.

Still, our votes matter. Christians have an opportunity—and a responsibility—to participate thoughtfully in public life. We can vote with wisdom, seek justice, show mercy, protect human dignity, and work toward the good of our communities.

Three Questions to Ask

So before you vote: pause, pray, learn, and discern.

1

Does this candidate
demonstrate
love of neighbor?

Consider how the candidate's policies and leadership would affect the whole community—not only people like you or people who agree with you.

2

Does this candidate
show **trustworthy
character?**

Look for honesty, humility, compassion, courage, self-control, and respect for others. Pay attention not only to what candidates promise, but also to how they speak, lead, and use influence.

3

Will this candidate
**use power
responsibly?**

Consider whether the candidate will protect human dignity, uphold freedom, serve the public fairly, and remember that political authority is a responsibility—not a possession.

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Issues to Prayerfully Consider

No single issue tells us everything we need to know about a candidate. Christian voters should consider the full range of ways that public decisions affect our neighbors.

Read Scripture. Learn where the candidates stand. Consider the likely results of their proposals. Then ask God for wisdom.

Loving Our Neighbors and Seeking the Common Good



Read:

Philippians 2:3–4; Micah 6:8; Mark 12:30–31

Jesus does not allow us to define “neighbor” as only the people who look like us, worship like us, vote like us, or live near us. Our neighbor is every person whose life may be affected by the choices we make.

Christian love asks us to look beyond our own interests. It calls us to seek communities in which people can live safely, work honestly, raise families, worship freely, and receive help in times of genuine need.



Ask:

- Who would benefit from this candidate's policies?
- Who might be overlooked or harmed?
- Does this candidate seek the good of the whole community or mainly appeal to one group?
- Does this candidate encourage neighbors to care for one another—or teach them to fear and resent one another?

Religious Freedom and Freedom of Conscience



Read:

Galatians 5:1; Romans 14:1–4; Isaiah 10:1–2

Religious freedom allows churches and individuals to live according to their faith without improper government interference or coercion. Christians should value this freedom not only for ourselves, but also for neighbors whose beliefs differ from our own.

Faith cannot be forced. A healthy government protects the right to worship, speak, gather, serve, and live according to conscience while applying the law fairly to all.



Ask:

- Will this candidate protect the freedom to worship and practice one's faith?
- Will that protection be extended fairly to people of different faiths?
- Does this candidate respect sincere questions of conscience?
- Can this candidate defend religious liberty without using faith as a political weapon?

Human Dignity and the Sanctity of Life



Read:

Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 2:7; Matthew 25:31–46

Every person is created in the image of God. Human worth is not earned through wealth, strength, independence, citizenship, achievement, or political influence.

God calls us to recognize the dignity of children, families, people with disabilities, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, those who are ill, and all who live in vulnerable circumstances. Public decisions should be evaluated by how well they protect life, safety, dignity, and the opportunity to flourish.



Ask:

- Does this candidate treat every person as someone made in the image of God?
- How would the candidate's policies affect people who have little money, power, or influence?
- Will this candidate protect people from violence, exploitation, neglect, and discrimination?
- Does the candidate's approach consistently respect life and human dignity?

Education and the Care of Children



Read:

Proverbs 22:6; Mark 10:14; Psalm 78:5–7; Deuteronomy 6:6–7

Children are a gift from God, and their well-being is a shared responsibility. Families hold a central role in forming children, while teachers, churches, schools, and communities also help young people develop knowledge, wisdom, character, and purpose.

Every child should have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment with the support and resources needed to grow.

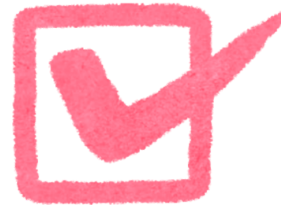


Ask:

- Will this candidate help children receive a strong and meaningful education?
- Does this candidate respect the important roles of parents, teachers, and local communities?
- How will the candidate support students with different abilities and needs?
- Will schools be safe places where students can learn, mature, and prepare to serve their communities?

Candidate Checklist

Don't stop at the campaign ad. Candidates naturally present themselves in the best possible light. Faithful voting requires us to look a little deeper.



Before making your decision:

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| ☐ Pray for wisdom. | ☐ Talk with Christians who may see an issue differently. |
| ☐ Learn what each office actually does. | ☐ Refuse to spread information you have not verified. |
| ☐ Read the candidates' stated positions. | ☐ Remember that a confident promise is not the same as a workable plan. |
| ☐ Examine their records when possible. | |
| ☐ Look for trustworthy information from more than one source. | |
| ☐ Consider both the intentions and the likely results of their proposals. | |

FOR EACH CANDIDATE, ASK THESE QUESTIONS

MY NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

What has this candidate actually done, not merely promised?

Who would benefit from the candidate's proposals?

Who might be harmed, burdened, or overlooked?

Does the candidate demonstrate honesty, self-control, and holy trustworthiness?

Does the candidate treat opponents and vulnerable people with dignity?

Are the candidate's plans realistic and responsible?

Which choice most closely reflects love, justice, mercy, and the common good?

When Faithful Christians Disagree

Christians who love Jesus and take Scripture seriously may reach different conclusions about candidates and policies. They may agree on a moral concern while disagreeing about the best practical response.

Political disagreement does not release us from the command to love one another.

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- ▶▶▶ We can speak honestly without being cruel.
- ▶▶▶ We can hold convictions without treating our neighbors as enemies.
- ▶▶▶ We can listen without surrendering our beliefs.
- ▶▶▶ We can disagree and still remember that our deepest identity is found in Christ—not in a political party.

After the election, we will still be neighbors.

We will still share churches, schools, workplaces, streets, and communities.

And we will still be called to *love one another.*

Ready to Vote?

Before you head to the polls:

- ☐ Confirm your voter registration.
- ☐ Find your polling place.
- ☐ Make a plan for when and how you will vote.
- ☐ Invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to vote.
- ☐ Review the full ballot, including local races.
- ☐ Bring your notes and a prayerful heart.



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Then go vote with courage, humility, and hope.

A PRAYER BEFORE VOTING

Gracious God,
You are Lord over every nation, leader, party, and
institution. Our hope rests in You alone.

Give us wisdom as we prepare to vote. Free us from fear,
pride, anger, and unquestioning loyalty. Help us listen
carefully, seek the truth, and consider the needs of our
neighbors.

Teach us to recognize Your image in every person. Give us
compassion for those who are suffering, courage to stand
for what is right, humility when faithful people disagree,
and discernment to choose leaders wisely.

May our votes reflect love of neighbor, concern for justice,
respect for human dignity, and a desire for the common
good. After the election, keep us faithful in the daily work
of serving our communities, loving our neighbors, and
following Jesus.

We place our trust not in political power, but in Christ,
whose kingdom has no end.

Amen.

