

IN THE MARGINS: I Voted Today

By Tony Martin

Editor

I voted this morning. It felt good. Later this evening I'll be checking in on the election results. This is some information I'd like to know. However –

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Disclaimer – this is not an excuse to avoid reading The Baptist Record. My pledge to you is that you'll leave having spent some time with us feeling better and more encouraged. So keep reading!

Pros of Taking a News Media Fast

1. **Spiritual Renewal:** The Bible often speaks of the importance of renewal. Isaiah 40:31a says, “*but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength*” (ESV). Constantly absorbing the world’s events can be draining. A break allows us to shift our focus and rejuvenate our spirits.
2. **Mental Wellbeing:** The news isn’t always good. Exposure to negative stories can affect our mood and perspective. Taking a step back can help guard our hearts and minds.
3. **Improved Focus on God:** Without the distractions of the latest headlines, we can redirect our attention to studying the Word, praying, or just basking in the presence of God.
4. **Better Sleep:** Ever found yourself staying up late, glued

to the screen for the latest update? A break can lead to better sleep, which is vital for physical and mental health.

Cons to Consider

1. **Being Uninformed:** There's a valid concern about not being aware of significant events, especially those that might directly impact our communities or loved ones.
2. **Limited Opportunities for Advocacy:** As Christians, we're called to be a light in the world and advocate for justice. By avoiding the news, we might miss out on chances to make a positive change.
3. **Potential Disconnect:** Avoiding news might lead to a sense of disconnect from the world or conversations with friends and family.

The Christian Perspective

From a Christian standpoint, while it's essential to be informed and engaged with the world, it's equally important to protect our spiritual and mental wellbeing. The world can be chaotic, and Jesus offers us peace. In John 16:33, He says, *"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

By taking a periodic news media fast, we're not choosing ignorance but rather intentional reflection and realignment with God's peace. Remember, we're not called to be constantly consumed by the world but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2).

In Conclusion

Taking a periodic news media fast has its pros and cons. But, considering the benefits of spiritual and mental refreshment,

it might be worth giving it a shot. Besides, in the grand scheme of eternity, taking a short break from the news won't render us completely out of the loop. Instead, it might bring us closer to the One who holds all things together.

What do you think? Is it time to hit that 'pause' button on the news for a little while? Whatever you choose, remember to anchor yourself in the everlasting Word, which never changes, no matter the headlines of the day.