

IN THE MARGINS: Reflections after the election

By Tony Martin

Editor

I watched very little of the returns last night. I voted, did my part, and decided that marinating in nonstop coverage didn't seem to serve any helpful purpose. Instead, I watched an incredible documentary on composer John Williams on Disney+. Sometimes, a little distance is good for the soul.

That said, I was up at 4:30 this morning to check the results—early even for me. I thought counting might take a few days, but the results were in sooner than I expected. I had called the outcome of the presidential election, though, and this morning it hit me: an election is more than a vote on a candidate; it's a referendum on the people casting the votes. We, as a nation, collectively shape the leadership we choose.

In these moments, emotions are raw. I've already seen some of my Democrat friends and family expressing genuine despair. To them, my unsolicited advice is this: hold tight to your roots as advocates for the everyday person, and don't stay in your bubble. Maybe it's a chance to refocus. If your priorities don't align with the concerns of most Americans, there's wisdom in re-evaluating what's truly impactful.

To my Republican friends, this is your time to celebrate. The Oval Office, the Senate, and most likely the House of Representatives are all in your corner. Take your victory lap—but let's keep it gracious. Leadership is a temporary stewardship, not a permanent possession. While you may feel a sense of triumph, let humility and responsibility guide you, especially given the deep divisions in our country. We could all do a better job at listening to each other.

As Christians, whether our “side” wins or loses, we are called to a higher standard. Romans 13:1 reminds us, *“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.”* Our role isn’t to gloat in victory or despair in defeat; it’s to respond with faith, knowing that God’s plan is at work, even when it’s hard to see. We can have confidence that, win or lose, our faith calls us to be good stewards of our civic duty, prayer warriors for our leaders, and compassionate neighbors to each other.

That brings me to where I find my contentment: prayer. I’ve made it a daily practice to pray for the president, and I’ll add the president-elect to my list now. I pray that they may come to understand that they, too, are under God’s authority, just like the rest of us. Proverbs 21:1 reminds us, *“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.”*

Regardless of who sits in office, God’s principle of sowing and reaping remains in effect. Every action brings consequences, and our leaders are no exception. That truth should give us both a sense of peace and a reason to stay on our knees.

So, let’s all take a deep breath. God is sovereign, and He’s exceptionally skilled at guiding the course of history. Because of that, we can live with joy, even if our circumstances or our leaders don’t match our preferences. Psalm 46:10 speaks to this calm assurance: *“Be still, and know that I am God.”* We can rest knowing that He is in control.

How do I feel about the results of this election? My honest response is simple: “We’ll see.” Time will reveal what this season holds, and no matter what unfolds, we have a reason for hope. Let’s respond with grace, dignity, and the unshakeable joy that comes from knowing who’s really in charge.