

# IN THE MARGINS: This troubled political season

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There's a pretty significant vote coming up next week.

If you've been paying attention to the news or scrolling through social media, you know our country is in the thick of another intense political season. In my 68 years, I've never seen anything quite like it. Tensions are high, conversations turn heated in seconds, and people seem more divided than ever. As Christians, how do we navigate this? How do we engage wisely and still reflect Christ in such a polarized environment?

Let's dive into three key areas that will help us stand firm in our faith during this season: voting with wisdom, accepting the outcome graciously, and behaving with kindness toward those who don't share our views.

## **1. Exercise Wisdom When Voting**

The pressure to conform to a particular side is overwhelming. The media bombards us with narratives that tell us what we *should* believe, think, and do. But the Bible encourages us to seek wisdom from above (James 1:5). God has given us minds to think independently and hearts to discern right from wrong.

Voting is a stewardship responsibility. It's essential to do your homework, research the candidates, and prayerfully consider which leaders align with values that honor God. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Voting isn't about following trends; it's about following

convictions that align with God's truth.

## **2. Graciously Accept the Outcome**

No matter the results, someone is going to feel disappointed. But our response to the outcome matters. Philippians 4:11-13 offers us a valuable reminder about being content regardless of circumstances: "...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content." The same God who was on the throne before the election will still be on the throne after it.

As hard as it may be, accepting the outcome graciously is part of being salt and light in the world (Matthew 5:13-16). It's an opportunity to demonstrate faith, trusting that God is sovereign over all things – yes, even election results. Romans 13:1 reminds us that "there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." This doesn't mean we have to agree with everything a leader says or does, but it does mean we recognize that God's hand is still at work.

## **3. Love Your Neighbor – Even When They Disagree**

Here's the real challenge: how do we love people who don't see the world the way we do? Jesus made it clear that loving others is non-negotiable (John 13:34-35). But it's tough when those others hold opposing political views, isn't it?

We need to remember that our ultimate identity is not in our political affiliation but in Christ. People around us – whether they voted the same way or not – are still made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Colossians 3:12-14 encourages us to "put on...compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." We can disagree without disrespect. We can engage without enraging.

Choosing kindness and respect, even when tensions are high, models the love of Christ in a divided world.

## **God Is Still in Control**

At the end of the day, elections come and go, but our hope remains in the One who never changes. Psalm 46:10 reminds us, “Be still, and know that I am God.” It’s a promise that God is in control, no matter how chaotic things seem. The leaders we elect will make decisions – some good, some bad – but our trust isn’t in government. Our trust is in the Lord, who is working all things together for good (Romans 8:28).

This political season might feel overwhelming, but remember: We are citizens of heaven first (Philippians 3:20). So, let’s vote wisely, accept the outcome with grace, and love others fiercely – even those who think differently. In doing so, we reflect the peace and hope of Christ to a world desperate for both.

Stay encouraged, friends! God’s got this – He always has, and He always will.