

Salt & Light

Fall 2004

The Newsletter of the Social Concerns Ministry Team

You are the salt of the earth...
You are the light of the world...

Educating and informing the church body in light of biblical principles

Mt. 5:13-14

Editorial Note:

This issue of *Salt & Light* has been prepared as a resource to help people faithfully participate in the upcoming November elections. Page 1 articles make a general case for why Christians must vote, and also explain the difference between the national parties on the one issue most prominently highlighted at the national conventions. Articles on pp. 2-3 add further reasons for participation in the upcoming elections, including the small margin of victory that decided the last presidential election. The final article on pp. 3-4 explains the vital importance of electing a president who will appoint good judges.

A Sacred Duty: Why Christians Must Vote

From: BreakPoint with Charles Colson, August 23, 2004

In Deuteronomy 16 Moses tells the Israelites: "You shall appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes...and they shall judge the people." The term *judges and officials* covered all government leaders. Besides hearing cases and rendering decisions, they set public policy and could even call out the military in a crisis.

Given these heavy responsibilities, the criteria for selecting judges were strict. They were to be men who feared God, who were committed to the truth, and who hated dishonest gain. And they were warned: "You shall not pervert justice; you shall not show partiality; and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe...subverts the cause of the righteous."

When Moses commanded the Israelites to appoint God-fearing leaders, he wasn't just talking to

a handful of citizens who felt like getting involved. The command was directed to *all* citizens. And modern Christians are under the same obligation to choose leaders who love justice.

Ironically, the Scriptures warn that if we value prosperity over justice, we'll end up losing both. Moses told the Israelites to "follow justice and justice alone." He follows this command with a promise that they will "live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you." In other words, if you want prosperity, choose leaders committed to justice.

In the Old Testament, God often sent people to find particular individuals to lead. Today, in our modern democracy, free citizens act as God's agents for choosing leaders and we do it by voting. †

A Prominent Election Issue

At the national political party conventions, one entire speech was devoted to a single issue: embryonic stem cell research (at the Democratic convention). Since then, many people have gotten the wrong impression that Democrats are for stem cell research and Republicans are not. *Wrong*. Both parties are for *adult* stem cell research--which is the only form that has produced successful medical treatments. Democrats, however, also support *embryonic* stem cell research, which involves fatally cutting up human beings at the embryonic stage of their development to obtain cells for research. †

Christians and Elections

From: www.lookinguntoJesus.net, June 13, 2004

In many places, the citizens have no say regarding who will lead the country. Whether it be by monarchy, dictatorship, or through unjust election practices, some leaders acquire and exercise authority without so much as a word from the average person. What a privilege it is then to live in a country where we are entitled to vote;

where we can express our view and it actually counts.

So, who should you vote for? ...you must vote with your conscience. Party platforms are making this election to be about social programs and monetary wealth. Respectfully, such things should be of little consequence to the Christian when it comes time to fill out the ballot. Moral

issues are where it is at. We live in a day when the Christian's voting possibilities are limited by what parties and individuals will do on issues such as abortion and same-sex marriages.

Use your vote to stand against immorality, not to cushion your pocketbook. †

Remember Florida

From: Candi Cushman, *Citizen*, July 2004

"If the last election has taught us anything, it's that every vote counts," said Dr. Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "So it's absolutely critical that we impress upon Christians the need to be registered and to vote their values."

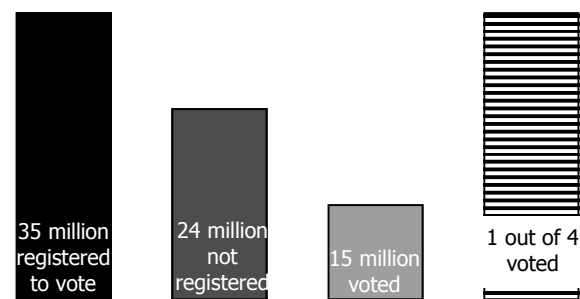
Problem is, believers haven't. According to statistics from The Pew Research Center and the Republican National Committee, in 2000, nearly half of the nation's 59 million self-identified evangelicals who were qualified to vote—24 million—didn't even bother to register. And only 15 million of the 35 million who *were* registered went to the polls. That means less than half of the nation's evangelicals voted in 2000.

"Sometimes people of faith say, 'Well, God is going to take care of everything,'" Father Frank Pavone said. "But what Christians need to realize is that God takes care of everything precisely through His people. He always calls His people into the battle." But, as Pavone's own internal study revealed, a large

portion of the troops have gone AWOL.

Senate-race states are first priority because "we need to build a veto-proof majority in the Senate for issues Christians care about and to take away the ability of [some] to filibuster votes on good judicial nominations. †

Christian voting patterns for the 2000 elections 59 million evangelical voters



Involvement in the Political Process

From: <http://family.custhelp.com>, August 23, 2004

Is it important for citizens to be involved in the political process? Yes. You can start by participating in the electoral process. I think it is a disgrace that half the Christians in America aren't even registered to vote, and of those who are, only half go to the polls. America is not ruled by a dictatorship; it is blessed to have a representative form of government that Abraham Lincoln described as being "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

The Constitution declares that you and I are the government.

When we withhold our influence and participation, we yield by default to those who promote immoral and destructive policies. We owe it to our children and to future generations to defend the principles in which we believe—the glorious freedom bought with the blood of so many brave young men

In the 2000 Presidential election, the margin of victory in Florida was 537 votes—but in one other state it was only 366. One medium-sized church could have swung the entire state to their preferred candidate.

and women. Shame on us for failing to do our duty to God and country. It is unconscionable that so many Christians today have concluded that it is somehow immoral to "get political." I don't believe the

Founding Fathers intended to exclude people of faith from the process. There is not a scrap of evidence to indicate such. †

Judges and the Election

From: Evie Brad and Phyllis Schlafly, CitizenLink, August 9, 2004

Should the current state of the judicial system be a key influence in the way that people vote in the upcoming election?

It is the most important issue. And yes, it should influence them. There are two reasons. The first reason is that the man who is elected president in November will probably have the opportunity to make several, perhaps even four, Supreme Court appointments. So it is very important to elect one who believes in constitutional judges as opposed to those who believe in a living and evolving document that they can interpret

according to their own social preferences.

The other reason is that it seems to be clear that some of the candidates are for same-sex marriage and are for taking God out of the Pledge of Allegiance. But they know that opinion isn't popular and they don't want to say so. So they take a position that leaves it all up to the courts and leaves it up to the judges. Now, these are not decisions that judges should make, they are decisions that should be made by Congress and the state legislature. So if a candidate takes the position of support of

judicial supremacy, he is really taking the position for the very radical, left-wing decisions that have been coming out and there may be more in the future...

Many Christians don't consider the impact of judicial supremacy. Many wouldn't list the confrontation of judicial supremacy as a priority. But there are few more important things for Christians to address.

The consequences of judicial supremacy are all around us and they affect the most vital issues of our time. Probably the most supremacist decision of the 20th

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Judges and the Election

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century was *Roe v. Wade*, through which the court created a new right called abortion, which was never recognized in the Constitution. That was kind of the godfather of many other activist decisions.

For example, the court has created other so-called rights like the right to sodomy, or the right to a same-sex marriage license, or the right of an illegal alien to get taxpayer benefits, or the right of the smut-peddler to peddle his wares even with taxpayers' money. *Roe v. Wade* was such a major landmark in courts stepping out of bounds and beginning a trend of what I

consider unconstitutional, supremacist decisions. If you care about rights, if you care about morality, if you care about the whole concept of self-government, then you must be concerned about this issue of judicial supremacy.

We want to live in a country

where we elect representatives and they fulfill the will of the people. We do not want to live in a country where we are governed by a tight-knit group of supremacists who are ignoring the will of the people. People can and must be active in this issue. †

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