

Follow the Lamb: Essential Attitudes

Bethany Assembly of God

9.18.2024

Central Proposition: You should engage with politics like a Christian.

Introduction

I believe that Christians should be engaging in politics. We can vote, have political conversations and attempt to change people's minds, sign petitions, and email our representatives. Some may get more involved and run for office, write an article, or host a podcast. There is biblical precedent for God's people seeking to influence a culture or country toward righteousness using whatever means He puts at their disposal, including political means. So if Christians should engage in politics, what should be the manner of our engagement? I don't mean method of engagement, but attitude.

1. You can engage out of love. See Galatians 5:19-24; Proverbs 29:2; John 3:16; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Matthew 5:43-45.

Some people hear "love" and think it means that they should be passive. On the opposite side, there are those who believe that the virtue of love does not belong in politics. We have to fight fire with fire. But God's love is different from either of these positions. It defines not only how we treat people, but why we engage in politics in the first place. This kind of love is a desire for people to be blessed and experience good, especially to know God. And if the motive is love, so should the manner be. No one will believe you if you claim to act out of love but your manner exudes hate. We should be loving in manner as well as intent. The love of God teaches us to involve ourselves for the benefit of others.

2. You can engage to serve. See Luke 22:25-27.

Politicians are sometimes called public servants. Unfortunately, that is often not the case and they end up serving themselves. When believers engage politically, it can't be as those who wield power for personal gain. We should seek to serve. Serving does not mean moral compromise but it does mean genuinely seeking to help and bless others before yourself. Serving doesn't mean that you roll over for evil, but it does mean that you seek to act on behalf of others, not just on behalf of yourself. Our witness for Christ depends on it and He leads the way in it.

3. You can place truth over tribe. See 1 Cor. 13:6; Proverbs 12:22.

A third trait that should characterize the attitude of Christians as we engage with politics is honesty and sincerity. We should not be guilty of repeating trumped up stories, even if they come from political candidates we support. The fact that we hold our cause so dear is not a reason to abandon integrity, sincerity, and honesty. We claim to serve the one who is the Truth. Shall we serve Him with less than the truth? Shall we rationalize exaggerations, half-truths, and bold faced lies because our cause is too important for us to lose? We must not. And we should not be so tribal in our commitments that we refuse to call out those we support when they are insincere or lying.

4. You can act with courage. See Daniel 3:14-30.

If you are going to stand for truth in love in the arena of politics, whether in how you vote, the conversations you have with coworkers, friends, and family, participating in a pro-life ministry, or some other form of political engagement, it's going to take courage. We don't need courage for advancing the agenda of a political party but for glorifying God, standing for righteousness, and blessing others.

Conclusion

Let's not compromise by adopting worldly attitudes. It's not only that we engage but *how* we engage that matters. What if part of our mission to serve the world is to be able to have loving, honest conversations about what can bring blessing into people's lives? That may include some political ideas. Of course, we should also take those opportunities to point out our primary allegiance: Jesus. Jesus is King.