

## The Presidential Race

The time for decision making is upon us. While many Christians are hoping that a miraculous intervention will occur before November 8 and provide some other candidate who is more palatable to everyone, if the Lord doesn't choose to do that, we will need to cast a vote based on who we think will be best for our nation and most glorify God.

Is deciding not to vote a viable Christian option? The argument for not voting is that both candidates are deeply flawed and sinful and we should vote for neither. I understand the idea, but also know that all of us are deeply flawed and sinful, yet the Lord is quite capable of using the most sinful leaders to work His will for the world. I believe that when given the power to make a choice with our vote we should prayerfully step up to the plate and make the best decision we can. Because we are not equipped to judge the relative morality of two flawed humans we can only cast our vote based on our understanding of where each candidate stands on the issues that we think are most important. The Lord will take care of the rest. Eric Metaxas the author of biographies of William Wilberforce (Amazing Grace) and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in this [recent article](#) provided his rationale for deciding that for him, not voting is not an option.

CEI does not issue political endorsements, but it may be helpful to point out some of the issues that will be affected by the outcome of the Presidential race. Each of us may weigh these issues differently and feel led to support different candidates but there are some big issues at stake.

**Sanctity of Life** – For many Christians preserving the lives of unborn children is the most important issue. The possibility of overturning Roe V Wade and a host of other Right to Life issues will be determined by who the next President appoints to take justice Scalia's seat on the Court. We have also heard [over the past year](#) that if the Congress should flip and be controlled by Democrats they will likely stop using the Hyde Amendment that restricts Federal funds from supporting abortions as a rider on federal legislation. This means that selecting Representatives and Senators who will support the Right to Life is also critical, particularly in the [Senate](#).

**Religious Liberty** -- For Christians working in the public schools, protections of religious liberties are very important. Without significant protections of our religious thought and speech teachers could be required to promote views on gay marriage and transgender restroom policies that are contrary to their own personal views. These issues are sure to come up in the Supreme Court in the next few years – again making the presidential election critical. Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in the first 13 minutes of this [recent podcast](#) very effectively explains the importance of the Supreme Court appointments to the Christian worldview.

**School Governance** – Will our schools be controlled by local school boards or by the US Department of Education? Over the past decade many school employees learned, through the No Child Left Behind Act and the Common Core Standards, what school governance from Washington, DC would be like, and were not at all happy with the result. According to Education Week, Clinton "Supports the Common Core State Standards," while Trump, "has been clear throughout the campaign: wants the Common Core State Standards gone." If you

want to dig into the candidates' positions on other education issues Education Week has produced a [helpful chart](#) that presents the candidates' positions on this and a host of other educational issues.

**National Security** – The creation of ISIS has brought the issue of international terrorism to the fore once again. This, coupled with the tragic civil war in Syria where [Christians and Syrian civilians](#) are being persecuted and in some cases murdered by the government of Syria, as well as the continued deterioration of relations with Russia has made foreign policy a huge factor in the presidential race. If you believe that the United States should shoulder some responsibility to ensure that the world is a safe place where freedom of religion can flourish you should factor the candidates view on this issue into your electoral decisions.

**Support for the Poor**-- The Christian legacy is one of caring for the less fortunate in our society. Jesus' brief earthly ministry was one of constantly reaching out personally to the sick and homeless. Since the 1960's when President Lyndon Johnson launched the war on poverty our nation has attempted to eradicate poverty through federal programs. After 50 years the battle has not been won. While many Christians believe that it is a proper role of government to shoulder the responsibility for caring for the poor, many others believe that this is an area that should primarily be reserved for personal and church ministry. Where you stand on this issue could be a major deciding factor in casting your vote. You can read recent statements by each of the candidates on the issue [here](#).

The two candidates have much different views on all of these issues. Before we vote we need to think through these and perhaps other issues and pray to the Lord for wisdom and discernment. It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit will guide each of us in our voting and that in this way Christians will serve as salt and light our nation.

Many of us are horribly saddened with the nature of the race and most Americans believe that it is the most divisive presidential election they have ever witnessed. The divisions in our nation have grown deeper and more bitter over the past decade and we are left wondering if our culture can ever be healed. I take encouragement from knowing that the Lord can work miracles and has historically intervened many times when things seem most hopeless. I encourage you, before you cast your vote, to lift up in prayer these petitions from *Method of Prayer* by Matthew Henry. The Lord can do far more than we can even imagine:

*O you hope of Israel, its savior in time of trouble, be not like a stranger in the land or like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a night; but be always in the midst of us: We are called by your name, O do not leave us. Though our iniquities testify against us, act, O Lord, for your name's sake; though our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against you.*

*Restore us to yourself, O Lord God of hosts, and let your face shine, that we may be saved! O stir up your might and come to save us!*

*Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation; yes, let your salvation be near to those who fear you, that glory may dwell in our land. Let steadfast love and faithfulness meet, righteousness and peace kiss each other: Let faithfulness spring up from the ground and righteousness look down from the sky; yes, let the Lord give what is good: Let righteousness go before him and make his footsteps a way.*

*O let the throne of Christ endure forever among us, even the place of your sanctuary, that glorious throne set on high from the beginning.*

*Let your lampstand never be removed from its place, though that is what we deserve, because we have abandoned the love we had at first. Never do to us as you did to your place that was in Shiloh, where your name shall dwell at first.*

*Let us never know what a famine of the word means; nor ever be forced to wander from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth, to seek the word of God.*

*O Lord, be the stability of our times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; and let the fear of the Lord be our treasure: Let the righteous flourish among us, and let there be those who fear you in our land, while the sun endures and as long as the moon, throughout all generations; that peace may abound, and that children yet to be created may praise the Lord.*

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