



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

As I write this, Election Day 2024 still lies ahead; but as you read it, the momentous day has passed. Our two perspectives, straddling Election Day, lead me to focus on pertinent biblical truths that endure on both sides of our national election, or any other pivotal event – personal, communal, national, or global.

There are those today who are disappointed or even devastated by the election results, others are pleased and even celebratory. Whichever camp we inhabit today, we can trust that the bigger picture has not changed: God still reigns supreme (e.g., Psalm 99:1), and is still working all things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28). God's love, sovereignty, and eternal plan for his people continue to echo faithfully throughout the Bible, repeatedly reassuring us as we wonder what will happen next in our own precarious life and times.

In the aftermath of the elections, some people will have theories or even confident pronouncements about how the outcome reflects God's plan for our country. My own experience in reading God's plan goes something like this: "I wonder what He is doing in all this?"; "Oh, *now* I see what He was up to!"; "Oops, once again, there was a lot more to this picture than I could see." After all, God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways (Isaiah 55:8). But that is by definition a marvelous thing, since He is God – almighty, all-knowing, and invariably loving – and we are not.

So, even though there may be national discord today and big changes brewing, and we may not know how life will unfold for our country going forward, there is much we *do* know about the bigger picture from the truth in Holy Scripture, which has not been the least bit dislodged by the events of a rambunctious election cycle.

We know that "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes", and to "not put your trust in princes, in mortal men who do not save (Psalm 118:9; Psalm 146:3). We know to trust in God alone (e.g., Psalm 31:14, Proverbs 3:5-6), who "changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings" (Daniel 2:21). He has declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose" (Isaiah 46:10).

Knowing this, we do well to acknowledge God's authority in politics and in all other matters, and willingly submit to it as a child to a loving father, whether it suits our personal vision or not (Romans 13:1). For as Jesus himself testified, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). He reminded a Roman governor who tried to lord his power over Him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above" (John 19:11). By God's authority, some leaders are divinely raised up, others are divinely allowed to rise up.

Given all this, how should followers of Christ respond to the outcome of the election? Like we truly believe the above-mentioned Scriptures, whether the candidates we supported won or lost.

By focusing on these enduring truths, we can see to it that we are neither troubled nor smug about Tuesday's political outcome (e.g., Matthew 24:6; Esther 4:13). We can retain and exude imperishable hope, joy, and confidence for both the present and future (Romans 8:38-39; James 1:2-4). This will pique others' interest in the reason for our peace in all circumstances, giving opportunities to profess Jesus, our soul's steadfast anchor (1 Peter 3:13-15; Hebrews 6:17-20).

We can shine his light in the darkness by continuing to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us, and to pray fervently for our government leaders, whoever they may be (2 Corinthians 4:6; Luke 6:27; 1 Timothy 2:1-2). Come what may, we take heart, for we know the glorious end of the story for the Kingdom that matters more than any earthly realm (John 16:33; Revelation 21-22).

With love in the Lord,
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