

Mary Craig**From:** Mary Craig**Sent:** Sunday, September 30, 2012 12:09 PM**Subject:** Mary Craig Ministries October 2012 e-mail

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

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One doesn't need to be much of a history buff to realize the influence of God and His people on the course of world history, the USA included. We see that influence throughout the Scriptures, from Abraham's discourse with God over Sodom and Gomorrah to Esther's influence, to David coming to the understanding that he may be the king, but he was not above the Law. We see influence for evil in King Ahab, but influence for good by Nehemiah (cupbearer to the king). We also see Jesus telling folks, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar, and unto God what is God's." We see secular rulers, like Cyrus of Persia, being used by God for God's purposes, such that God designated him His anointed servant (Isaiah 45). Caesar Augustus ordered the census, being used by God to bring Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem in fulfillment of prophecy. Even Nero was used by God as he presided over the Roman Empire, an empire that allowed the spread of the gospel. You get my drift.

There is a realm that belongs to God and another realm that belongs to Caesar (government). Christians are important in both realms to be salt and light. We also need to remember that in elections, we are not voting for pastors or priests or ministers, but for government authorities. We want to be able to support their policies inasmuch as these authorities are placed over us; we are voting them in for the most part. Read Romans 13 on civil authorities.

Some people believe that all government is evil and that Christians should avoid participation, even in voting. But Romans 13 states that every person should be loyally subject to the governing authorities for those exist by God's permission and sanction and appointment. (Proverbs 8:15; Romans 13:1) Civil authorities are God's servant for our good, according to Romans 13:4, there to execute God's wrath (punishment, vengeance) on wrongdoers. Romans 13:6 even says to pay taxes! This implies that people are working and earning revenue on which taxes would be due (not just the richest of a community but all who have revenue on which taxes are levied). Romans 13:8 even tells us to keep out of debt, a lesson for individuals, families, and governments!

The United States of America is facing a crossroads in its political and national direction. Never has the gap between ideologies been such a yawning gulf.

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Some folks think Christians should not be concerned with political elections or party platforms because we should, they say, do evangelism not politics. But while politics does not save people, those chosen to be civil authorities over us have a huge influence on daily life, freedom of religion, the leanings of morality, and where our culture is going. Cultural conditioning is not only propagated by the various forms of media, but also through the decisions of various legislative bodies, executive orders, and the courts.

It isn't do politics and not evangelism either; that has been the goal of the social gospel movement. Good laws won't and don't solve the nation's problems alone. We must evangelize and live in a culture where giving the whole counsel of God is not considered a hate crime or hindered, demeaned or barred.

My husband, Rev. Jim Craig, and I recently attended a conference at which Dr. Wayne Grudem was speaking. Dr. Grudem is a highly respected theologian. He wrote the Greek Language textbooks we used in seminary to learn New Testament Greek. He has published a wonderful book on systematic theology and on politics and the Bible and other subjects. He currently is on the staff of Phoenix Theological Seminary in Phoenix, AZ. His web site address is: www.waynegrudem.com.



Dr. Grudem's topic at this conference concerned politics and Christian participation. A question came up: Would it be wrong for a Christian to vote for a Mormon, or for a Jew, or for a person from a different denomination, etc.? Dr. Grudem's answer was, "No." It is never right to avoid voting. Every believer has a share in ruling when he/she votes. His counsel is to vote for the candidate who does "good," from the local to the federal level of government. Consider Psalm 82. Some at this conference even said, "It's a sin not to vote." You decide.

Another form of "voting" is with our dollars. Our spending habits--where we put our money and for what, where we give and how much, whether we choose to save or spend ourselves into debt, and all such things reflect what we value. It is the same with governments.

In the upcoming elections, not just for President but also on the local, state, and federal levels of civil authorities, policies and proposals, we are voting as much for vying ideologies as anything. Therefore, it is more important to understand where the candidates stand in relationship to their party's platform and how their policies and proposals reflect those positions. To help you personally in this regard, I am incorporating a link to Dr. Grudem's web site and the pages that give a clear and concise comparison and contrast between the political parties currently.



I hope you will take the time to review this excellent help and prayerfully consider, not whether you will vote, but how you will vote. You must decide; let the Holy Spirit guide as you consider God's Truth and your responsibility. Then get involved!

<http://www.waynegrudem.com/moral-issues-chart-without-party-labels/> This helpful document includes Scripture references and legal cases. Let your conscience be informed by the Word of Truth; then go! Get going!

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