



# VOTER'S GUIDE

## FOR THE SERIOUS CHRISTIAN

Are you a deeply committed Christian? Do you believe God has something to say about the important moral and political issues of the day? This VOTER'S GUIDE assumes that Truth is not *relative*, but is in fact *revealed* by our Creator for the common good of mankind. It discusses some of the issues upon which God has spoken with clarity and provides guidance regarding how to evaluate candidates and laws in the light of these important issues.

### **The Five Non-Negotiable Moral Issues:**

- Same-Sex (homosexual) "Marriage"
- Abortion
- Embryonic Stem Cell Research
- Euthanasia ("Mercy" Killing)
- Human Cloning

On the following pages you will learn about the following:

- Your role as a Christian voter
- Details regarding five non-negotiable moral issues
- How to determine a candidate's position
- How to vote as a Christian
- How *not* to vote as a Christian
- How this guide may be used by churches and non-profits

## YOUR OBLIGATION AS A CHRISTIAN VOTER

If you take your Christian faith seriously, then this VOTER'S GUIDE is for you. It will help you to identify fundamental moral issues, and in turn, vote for the laws and the candidates who will promote policies consistent with God's righteous standards.

The Bible teaches us that government was instituted by God to promote the common good and to punish evil (Romans 13:1-6). Proverbs 29:2 tells us, "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan" (NIV).

There is no doubt that our Founding Fathers believed in God and His interest in the social and political affairs of men. In drafting the Declaration of Independence in 1776, they appealed both to "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" and to the "Supreme Judge of the world" in support of their decision to separate from England.

Furthermore, these founders directly connected their democratic values to the fact that we are created in the image of God (the *Imago Dei*): "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator** with certain **unalienable Rights**, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**" (emphasis added). For our nation's founders, Life was one of the non-negotiable rights derived from God. Later in the U.S. Constitution, they would add freedom of speech and freedom of religion in the First Amendment. As serious Christians, we should not shrink back from following their example—that is, voting according to God's design and plan.

As citizens of the United States of America, we are blessed to have a voice and vote regarding the laws which directly impact us, our children and future generations. 18<sup>th</sup> century political philosopher Alexander de Tocqueville observed famously that "America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, Amer-

ica will cease to be great.” *If individual Christians do not uphold God’s righteous moral standards when they vote, who will?*

Participation in the political process is the right and duty of all citizens.<sup>1</sup> As Christians, God calls us to be “salt” and “light” in the world (Matthew 5:13-16). He intends for us to have a positive impact, yet we live in times when far too often “evil” is called “good” and “good” is called “evil.” Citizens often support evil when they vote for candidates who propose or advance evil laws. When Christians are uninformed or silent, the vacuum created is often filled with immoral laws. Edmund Burke, a contemporary of William Wilberforce, believed that “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” *Are you willing to act in the cause of good?*

It is undeniable that *the common good* of our nation is best served by laws that reflect God’s moral order and ensure justice for *all* citizens. The Bible teaches that because we are created in God’s image, individuals have intrinsic value, independent of their utility or function. This includes “the least of these” — the pre-born, young children, the disabled, and the elderly, who are often the most innocent and defenseless among us. Although precious to God, they often have no voice or vote of their own. *If you do not speak for them when you vote, who will?*

This guide identifies five non-negotiable moral issues which are currently the subject of much debate in the public square and about which the Bible speaks with clarity. We realize that the Bible specifically addresses many other issues and that biblical principles provide the means to deal with every public policy decision. However, the fundamental moral issues discussed in this guide should provide a common foundation for all serious Christians. Though much more can be said about these subjects than the space in this guide permits, we sincerely hope that this information helps you to clarify your decisions regarding issues

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1 For information regarding how pastors and churches can legally engage in the political process, see our resource [Pastors, Pulpits & Politics: The Case for Clear Biblical Moral Teaching](http://www.nclplaw.org/resources). ([www.nclplaw.org/resources](http://www.nclplaw.org/resources))

and candidates, and that you are enabled to vote in a manner that honors God and promotes the common good.

## THE FIVE NON-NEGOTIABLE MORAL ISSUES

The five non-negotiable moral issues discussed below are Same-Sex “Marriage,” Abortion, Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Human Cloning.

### 1. Same-Sex (Homosexual) “Marriage”

God also designed family as the fundamental building block of society. Marriage has throughout history been defined as the union of one man and one woman. Any other proposed form of “marriage” or “family,” including same-sex “marriage,” is clearly contrary to the laws of Nature and Nature’s God. Any redefinition of marriage will have disastrous social and personal consequences. To preserve the common good, traditional marriage must be preserved.

God intentionally designed and created us in His image *male* and *female* (Gen. 1:27). He intends marriage to be a committed, lifelong, covenant relationship between a man and a woman, one that is based on love, respect, mutual submission and personal sacrifice (Deut. 5:18, 21; Eph. 5:21-33). Children are a blessing of marriage and God’s design is that mothers and fathers together create and raise children (Gen. 1:28; Psalm 127:3-5). Jesus confirmed that God’s design for family is only to be fulfilled within the context of a committed marriage of one man and one woman (Matt. 19:3-11).

All sexual relationships outside of marriage, including adultery, fornication and homosexual conduct, are forbidden. These are morally impure and personally destructive, and individuals will be judged by God for them (Lev. 18:22; Heb. 13:4; Romans 1:24-32; Matt. 5:27-32). There is tremendous safety and blessing in following God’s plan for marriage (Deut. 5:10, Romans

2:5-10). As Christians, we are specifically commanded to honor and esteem marriage (Heb. 13:4; Mal. 2:15; 1 Cor. 7:10-16).

## 2. Abortion

Scripture describes God's love for His children as beginning even before they leave the womb. *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well"* (Psalms 139:13-14 ESV).

God's hand is clearly at work in mankind, beginning at conception. New life is created in the womb as God breathes life into babies, even before they are physically born. In its simplest terms, therefore, abortion results in the termination of a life—an act which the Bible plainly condemns (Exodus 20:13).

*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations"* (Jeremiah 1:5 ESV).

Our Declaration of Independence gives the protection of life priority when it states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are **created** equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life**, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (emphasis added).

Because the Bible teaches that life begins at conception, the pre-born should be legally recognized as persons and have full protection of the law, including the right to life. Serious Christian voters should steadfastly refuse to support candidates who fail to protect the most innocent of their constituents—the pre-born. *If a candidate is unwilling to defend the lives of innocent people, how can he or she be entrusted to steward other precious rights and liberties while in office?*

### 3. Embryonic Stem-Cell Research

Because a society is measured by how it treats the weak and vulnerable, we must strive to build a culture of life. To do so, we must ensure that scientific advances always serve human dignity and do not end the lives of some for the benefit of others. All serious Christians should be able to agree on clear standards for the protection of innocent life. Human embryos should not be created for the purpose of experimentation or grown for body parts, and human life should never be bought and sold as a commodity.

The primary moral problem with embryonic stem cell research is that in order for these cells to be harvested from an embryo, the embryo must be destroyed. A human embryo is the earliest stage of human life following conception, and consists of a fertilized egg. As discussed above in the abortion section, the Bible declares that God's hand is at work during the earliest stage of life, which is conception. It follows, therefore, that the embryo should be considered fully human with full human value. It is unbiblical to sacrifice human beings for their medical benefits, even if those benefits are real.

Embryonic stem cell research results in the destruction of life, much in the same way abortion does. There have been all sorts of promises given regarding the miracles embryonic stem cell research may someday produce, but the fact is that not a single effective therapy has ever been produced through *embryonic* stem cell research. At the same time, there are over 100 current therapies using adult stem cell research, none of which requires the destruction of innocent life.

### 4. Euthanasia (“Mercy” Killing)

Human beings who are seriously ill or who are elderly have been killed, either by the withholding of food and water or by purposeful actions taken to abruptly end their lives (e.g., the medical practices of Dr. Jack Kevorkian). Those who promote

euthanasia argue that they are acting out of compassion for the sick and elderly. However, the Bible is adamant that no one has the right to take the life of another (Exodus 20:13). As already discussed, every human being is inherently unique and valuable and holds promise, even if he or she is crippled by developmental disability, injury, disease, or advanced aging. True mercy and compassion affirms the value and dignity of each person made in the image of God. They must be affirmed, loved and comforted—even with the onset of advanced illness or old age—not discarded.

## 5. Human Cloning

In the process of cloning, an egg (ovum) from a woman is surgically removed and taken to the laboratory where its nucleus is removed. The cell that is formed through this process, called a *cloned zygote*, then develops spontaneously into a cloned blastocyst, or *cloned embryo*.

What gives human beings value is not where they live, what they can do, or how they can function, but the fact that they are intrinsically human. The Bible states that we are created in God's image, and that we are made up of physical bodies and immaterial souls that bear His divine imprint (Gen. 1:27; 9:6). This idea that human beings are made in the image of God is what guides all our responsibilities towards other people, responsibilities which are different from our ethical responsibilities toward other living creatures. *The real question, then, is whether it is morally and Biblically acceptable to create a new person from the genetic makeup of another.*

Each human life is unique, born of a miracle that reaches beyond laboratory science. Human cloning would, for example, for the first time enable parents to determine the entire genetic makeup of their children. Because it bypasses sexual reproduction, cloning increasingly moves procreation away from human interaction and in the direction of manufacturing.

Human cloning is also viewed by some as a possible forerunner of genetic engineering, and should raise concerns for many serious Christians about eugenics, the concept of using genetic engineering to “improve” the human race.

These moral and ethical dangers associated with human cloning, along with the scientific practice of “disposing” of cloned embryos after their cells have been harvested, leads to the conclusion that human cloning is at odds with God’s design for the creation and preservation of life.

## **How to Research a Candidate’s Position**

Now that you have a better understanding of the five non-negotiable moral issues, your next step should be to determine which candidates are aligned with the biblical position on these issues. Through simple online research, you can determine the voting record and political history of candidates and where they stand on issues. Their previous voting histories on the five non-negotiable moral issues should take precedence over other concerns when determining whether candidates are worthy of your vote.

Several online resources are available to help voters understand candidates’ views on specific issues. Websites such as *Project Vote Smart* ([www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)), *On the Issues* ([www.ontheissues.org](http://www.ontheissues.org)), *iVoteValues* ([www.ivotevalues.com](http://www.ivotevalues.com)), *Easy Voter* ([www.lwvc.convio.net](http://www.lwvc.convio.net)), and *The Ballot* provide a wealth of nonpartisan facts. Other online voter resources include:

American Family Association ([www.afa.net](http://www.afa.net)): Voter Resources

Eagle Forum ([www.eagleforum.org](http://www.eagleforum.org)) : Election Central

Family Research Council ([www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org)): Voting Records

Focus on the Family ([www.focusonthefamily.com](http://www.focusonthefamily.com)): CitizenLink

National Right to Life ([www.nrlc.org](http://www.nrlc.org)): Voting Records

Pew Forum ([www.pewforum.org](http://www.pewforum.org)): Religion and Politics 08

Other sources of information that will help you determine candidates' viewpoints on the five non-negotiable moral issues include public statements, news reports, voter guides, campaign literature, campaign websites, articles and blogs.

When candidates are new to politics or have thin voting records, you may have to take the time to call or e-mail them in order to discuss their worldviews and positions on the five non-negotiable moral issues. Making this effort is important, however, as the candidates' positions on these issues will provide a clear window into their personal worldviews and ultimately will determine how they will exercise their governmental authority.

## **How to Vote**

- Identify the candidates on the ballot who are running for each office.
- Research the positions of those candidates thoroughly (See the section, “How to Research a Candidate’s Position”).
- Rank the candidates on the basis of how consistently their positions line up with biblical principles concerning the five non-negotiable moral issues covered in this guide.
- Vote for the candidate (or, if applicable, the issue) best aligned with biblical principles concerning the five non-negotiable moral issues.
- If all candidates vying for a specific office support positions contrary to the Bible on the five non-negotiable moral issues, choose the candidate likely to do the least harm to the common good (i.e., the “lesser of two evils”). In rare cir-

cumstances, you may find it is best to write in a candidate's name, or opt not to vote for any candidate at all.

- If the candidates are identical in their commitment to the five non-negotiable moral issues (or their lack thereof), identify how the candidates line up on *other* important issues, such as religious freedom or parental rights.
- If you are faced with a difficult choice unresolved by these guidelines, pray for wisdom and seek the counsel of godly people you trust.

## How *Not* to Vote

### **Do not take a candidate's word that he or she is a Christian.**

Serious Christian voters should not vote for candidates just because they claim to be Christians. It is a blessing when godly men and women choose to seek public office; however, not every candidate who claims to be a Christian actually possesses a biblical worldview. Do your homework to find out whether candidates really uphold the biblical standard regarding the five non-negotiable issues.

### **Do not vote along party lines.**

Serious Christian voters should not vote for candidates based on their political party affiliation. While it can take some additional time and research, Christian voters should ensure as much as possible that the candidates for whom they are voting share their values in every circumstance. Christians need to seek out candidates' views on each of the five non-negotiable issues and cast their votes accordingly, without regard for political party.

### **Do not fall for sound bites and good packaging.**

Serious Christians should be careful to make informed, intelligent choices about the candidates for whom they vote, rather than being seduced by the personality, appearance, or "packaging" of

a particular candidate. Charismatic, media-savvy politicians often seem attractive on the surface, but may in fact endorse categorically evil policy initiatives, while less dynamic candidates may be faithfully committed to upholding biblical principles with respect to the five non-negotiable issues.

**Do not put your personal interests first.** Serious Christians are called to vote for candidates who will use their elected offices to benefit the common good. Political issues outside of the five non-negotiable moral issues such as taxes or fiscal priorities are undeniably important, but should not sway Christians to cast votes for candidates who will benefit them personally at the expense of biblical principles. These are considered lesser issues and should not take precedence over the candidates' stands on the five non-negotiable issues.

## **Use of This VOTER'S GUIDE by Churches and Religious Non-Profits**

It is the legal opinion of attorneys for the National Center for Law & Policy that this VOTER'S GUIDE can be distributed by churches and religious non-profits without jeopardizing their non-profit status. According to IRS regulations, **Churches and non-profit organizations are permitted to educate their members about pending legislation, initiatives and contemporary moral issues.** It is perfectly legal for these tax-exempt organizations to discuss legislative issues, support or oppose legislation, encourage their members to support or oppose legislation, and offer facts and materials about important legislation, as long as the information is educational in nature and is not designed to support a particular political party or candidate. This VOTER'S GUIDE does not endorse any specific candidate for office or any particular political party, and therefore can be distributed by churches and non-profit organizations without concern for endangering their non-profit status.

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**Our focus is in the following areas:**

- Rights of Students
- Rights of Churches
- Rights in the Work Place
- Religious Land Use
- Rights of Marriage and Family
- Rights of Expression in the Public Square
- Right of Equal Access for Individuals and Groups
- Rights of the Unborn/Protection of Innocent Life



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# VOTER'S GUIDE FOR THE SERIOUS CHRISTIAN

**Are you sometimes confused about how you should vote on issues and candidates?**

This guide provides clear and concise information for sincere Christians desiring to cast votes consistent with their faith. Five non-negotiable issues are discussed and specific guidance is provided to help you support the right laws and narrow the candidates to those who best support the common good of society, whether they are running for national, state or local office.

## THE FIVE NON-NEGOTIABLES ARE:

1. Same-Sex (homosexual) "Marriage"
2. Abortion
3. Embryonic Stem Cell Research
4. Euthanasia
5. Human Cloning

This guide also addresses:

- Your role as a Christian voter.
- How to determine a candidate's position.
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