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## Voting as Christians

by *Leon J. Podles*

If a person is married, believes in God, goes to church, reads the Bible, and prays, chances are he will vote Republican—and he is a core member of the dreaded Religious Right. If a person is unmarried, never goes to church, never reads the Bible, and never prays, he will likely vote Democratic—and he belongs to the not-so-dreaded Secular Left. Certainly there are religious Democrats and irreligious Republicans, but according to the research of social scientists Louis Bolce and Gerald De Maio (“Our Secularist Democratic Party,” *Public Interest*, Fall 2002), the Democratic Party has become the political home of unbelievers. (See Rod Dreher’s article in this issue.)

Moreover, anti-Christian policies are far more entrenched in the Democratic Party than Christian policies are in the Republican. Republicans sometimes want to ignore abortion; Democrats want to promote it, and make it a litmus test. Despite their deep differences on other issues, all of the current Democratic presidential hopefuls made a pilgrimage to NARAL Pro-Choice America’s “celebration” of the thirtieth anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* to testify to their commitment to abortion. The Democrats have reinstated the constitutionally banned religious test for federal positions. If a judge is a faithful Catholic or Evangelical, the Democrats will likely try to block his appointment as a federal judge, for fear that it would reduce the accessibility of abortion.

Pro-abortion forces have a strong, probably unshakeable grip on the Democratic Party; pro-life forces have a weaker grip on the Republican Party. Voting Republican might or might not advance the protection of the unborn; voting Democratic will inevitably lead to the further entrenchment of abortion in American society, even if the Democrat is a pro-lifer who survived the abortionists’ inquisitions.

Although the Democrats sometimes use libertarian language and claim they want to make abortion simply a matter between a woman and her doctor, this is a lie. They want the government to fund abortion, to force insurers to cover abortion, to force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions, to prevent pro-life people from protesting abortion. The

libertarian language cloaks a determination to use the government to forcibly “liberate” people from “oppressive and discriminatory” traditions, such as protecting the life of the unborn.

Marriage and religion are closely connected; procreation and a belief and trust in a Creator are closely allied. Those who reject the meaning that marriage, family, and traditional religion give to life suffer a void, which they try to fill by seeking meaning in politics. This was the curse of Europe in the twentieth century, as the false religions of Nazism and Communism captured state after state. The new religion of liberation has its totalitarian aspect: It seeks to free man from his inherited prejudices (marriage, family, Christianity) through an activist state. This state, having created the void, then makes everyone dependent upon itself for meaning, at least for the only meaning it sees that life can hold: a perpetual liberation, a society that transgresses all boundaries.

Abortion has now destroyed more human life than Hitler and Stalin did—45 million in the United States, and tens of millions more in countries that have legalized abortion, some under pressure from the United States.

In a democratic society, legitimacy depends upon the voters. Voters have ultimate control of the system and can change the government if they really want to. Voting fraud and stolen elections can slow down but not stop a determined public; the judiciary and the bureaucracy in the end have to follow a determined and long-term public mood. A Christian voter performs a moral act when he votes. The morality of a government and the morality of an individual Christian are not the same thing—because God has instituted governments to enforce earthly justice, and a Christian has a destiny and a goal beyond this earth—but both governments and individual men are subject to moral laws.

Governments are ordained to protect the innocent from evildoers, from enemies foreign and domestic, and those who would destroy a child in the womb are evildoers. The US Supreme Court has declared a class of human beings outside the protection of the law, and the American government therefore does not carry out one of the purposes for which God has ordained it.

In a recent statement, the Vatican reiterated what has been the constant teaching of Christianity:

Those who are directly involved in lawmaking bodies have a “grave and clear obligation to oppose” any law that attacks human life. For them and for every Catholic, it is impossible to promote such laws or to vote for them. . . . In this context, it must be noted also that a well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals.

This is common moral sense, which applies to anyone, Christian or non-Christian, believer or non-believer. We should not abandon our moral principles in the voting booth.

A vote for a Democrat today is almost always a vote for abortion and a vote to violate the consciences of those of us who oppose abortion. The effect of various fiscal policies on the poor are uncertain; the effect of abortion on human life is certain. Whatever can be said for or against Democratic economic policies from a Christian point of view, nothing can be said in favor of their abortion policy. They have favored abortion at every stage and at every opportunity; they see no problem with forcing Christians to pay for abortion through taxes and compulsory insurance coverage; they will force Christian institutions to accept abortion; they will silence those who protest abortion. When Democrats do not do these things, it is only because they are weak. When they are strong, what will restrain them?

Is it a sin to vote Democratic? Usually yes, because a vote for a Democrat is a vote for a supporter of abortion or a vote that strengthens a party whose only sacred tenet is the right to unrestricted abortion. A vote for a pro-abortion Republican is usually also wrong, because a vote for any pro-abortion candidate is counted by politicians as support for abortion.

We have been solemnly warned that we will be judged on how we use what has been entrusted to us on this earth, and a vote in our society has value—it is a “talent” that we have been given. If we will be judged severely for failing to use the talents God has entrusted to us, how much more severely will we be judged for misusing them? If we have not merely failed to do good, but have by our vote for a pro-abortion candidate contributed to evil, and enabled the million-fold and easily avoidable slaughter of the unborn to continue, what words will we hear from the Judge?

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