

Ephesians: Finding Our True Identity
Voting Wisely In 2024 #11
Cornerstone Church Of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
October 13th, 2024

Sermon Notes

Big Idea: "Christ's saving grace and unifying power **transforms** our identity, **deepens** our relationships and **guides** our purpose."

How to Vote Wisely In 2024:

1. Pray And Ask God For Wisdom

Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. **Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV)**

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone-- ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. **1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NIV)**

This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into **exile** from **Jerusalem** to **Babylon**: ⁵ "**Build houses** and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ **Marry** and **have sons and daughters**; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷ Also, **seek the peace and prosperity** of the city to which I have carried you into exile. **Pray** to the LORD for it, **because if it prospers, you too will prosper.**" ⁸ Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹ They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the LORD. ¹⁰ This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and **fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place.** ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "**plans to prosper you** and not to harm you, plans to give you **hope and a future.** ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and **pray to me**, and **I will listen to you.** ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you **seek me with all your heart.** ¹⁴ I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will **gather you** from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and **will bring you back** to the place from which I carried you into exile." **Jeremiah 29:4-14 (NIV)**

2. Let Biblical Values Shape Your Voting

A. Pro-Life: Protecting the Sanctity of Life

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. **Psalms 139:13-14 (NIV)**

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." **Jeremiah 1:5 (NIV)**

David replied, “I fasted and wept while the child was alive, for I said, ‘Perhaps the LORD will be gracious to me and let the child live.’²³ But why should I fast when he is dead? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him one day, but he cannot return to me.” **2 Samuel 12:22-23 (NLT2)**

Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.

⁴ Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. **Psalm 82:3-4 (NIV)**

B. Pro-Israel: Supporting God’s Covenant People

¹ The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a **great nation**. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will **bless** those who bless you and **curse** those who treat you with contempt. **All the families** on earth will be blessed through you.” **Genesis 12:1-3 (NLT2)**

“I will bring my exiled people of **Israel back** from distant lands, and they will **rebuild** their ruined cities and live in them again. They will plant **vineyards** and **gardens**; they will eat their **crops** and drink their **wine**. ¹⁵ I will firmly plant them there in their **own land**. They will **never again be uprooted** from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God. **Amos 9:14-15 (NLT)**

Friday, May 14, 1948

“Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.” **Isaiah 66:8 (NIV)**

C. Biblical Values for Marriage and Family

So God created man **in his own image**, in the image of God He created him; **male and female** He created them **Genesis 1:27 (NIV)**.

“Haven’t you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female.’⁵ And he said, ‘This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’⁶ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.” **Matthew 19:4-6 (NLT2)**

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. **2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV)**

How can you stand with grace for Biblical values?

My next right step, I will:

- Be intentional about aligning your decisions with God’s principles
- Be respectful
- Follow Jesus in Believer’s baptism

<https://www.christianvoterguide.com/states/west-region/california/>



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Talk It Over

Introduction: Welcome to our small group discussion! Today, we will be exploring how we can use biblical principles to guide us in voting during the upcoming election. We will focus on three key areas: Pro-life, Pro-Israel, and Biblical values for marriage and family. Let’s begin by asking God to open our hearts and minds as we seek His wisdom for our decisions.

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for this opportunity to gather and discuss how we can vote according to Your will. Guide us through Your Word and give us wisdom as we seek to honor You in all areas of our lives, including our civic responsibilities. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Icebreaker: Share a time when you had a healthy disagreement but both parties were able to share and be heard?

Scripture Reading: Read **Jeremiah 29:4-14**

How does knowing that God is in control, even in difficult circumstances, bring you comfort? Can you share a time when you felt God was working through a challenging situation? **29:4-14**

What does it look like to live faithfully and purposefully in a situation where you feel out of place or uncomfortable, just as the exiles did in Babylon? **29:5-7**

Why do you think God called the exiles to seek the welfare of Babylon? How can we apply this in our communities today, even when circumstances aren’t ideal? **29:5-7**

Take a moment to share ways you can seek the welfare of your current community (neighborhood, workplace, or school).

Jeremiah 29:11 is often quoted for encouragement, but what does it mean to you in light of the full context of Jeremiah 29?

A. Pro-Life: Protecting the Sanctity of Life

Scripture Reading: Read **Psalms 139:13-14** and **Jeremiah 1:5**.

How does the Bible’s teaching about the sanctity of life influence the way we approach the issue of abortion when voting?

In what ways can we support life beyond just voting pro-life (e.g., supporting adoption, crisis pregnancy centers, etc.)?

Discuss how God’s view of life shapes your perspective on this issue, and what actions you feel called to take.

B. Pro-Israel: Supporting God's Covenant People

Scripture Reading: Read **Genesis 12:3** and **Psalms 122:6**.

Why is it important for Christians to support Israel? How does God's covenant with Israel influence your view on the U.S.-Israel relationship?

What specific policies or candidate stances relate to Israel? What should we look for as we prepare to vote?

Discuss how you can stay informed about current events related to Israel.

C. Biblical Values for Marriage and Family

Scripture Reading: Read **Genesis 2:24** and **Matthew 19:4-6**.

How does the biblical definition of marriage and family influence your vote? Why is it important to uphold these values in society?

How can we advocate for strong marriages and families beyond the voting booth?

In small groups, share practical ways to support marriages and families in your community, and how to be a voice for biblical family values in a loving and respectful way.

Micah 6:8 (on justice and mercy)

How can we balance justice and mercy when evaluating candidates and policies?

Proverbs 29:2 (on righteous leadership)

How important is the character of the leaders we elect?

Discuss examples where integrity and morality have had a significant impact on leadership.

Challenge for the Week:

Choose one of the three areas (pro-life, pro-Israel, or marriage and family) and do some research on how the candidates in your district align with biblical principles. Share your findings with the group next week.

Engage in Prayer:

Set aside time this week to pray for the upcoming election, asking for God's will to be done and for wisdom as you vote.

Family Warrior Prayer #3:

Dear Lord, thank You for the opportunity to explore these important issues from a biblical perspective. Help us to make wise, prayerful decisions in the upcoming election. Guide our nation's leaders to seek Your will and to lead with righteousness, integrity, and justice. We pray for Your protection over the unborn, Your blessing over Israel and for leaders who will stand with Israel, and the strengthening of marriages and families. In Jesus' name, Amen.