

What About ... Voting

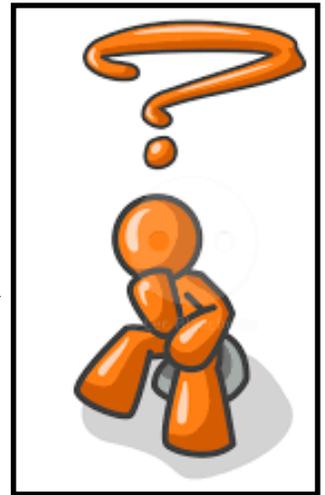
By Dave DeWitt

There is a comment I have heard a lot recently, from good sincere fellow Christians. It goes like this:

It does not matter who you vote for, because God is sovereign, and He will put in office whoever He chooses.

It is clear that God is sovereign and *authorities...which exist are established by God.*

- **Romans 13:1** *Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*
- **Psalm 75:7** *But God is the Judge; He puts down one and exalts another.*
- **Daniel 2:21** *He removes kings and establishes kings.*



Free Will

But can we conclude, therefore, **It does not matter who you vote for**? It seems to me that would mean our free will does not exist. True, our free will is eclipsed by the sovereignty of God, because God is God. But that does not eliminate our free will or the consequences of our free will, or God's judgment on our free-will choices. God calls on us to make real choices which have real consequences, and voting is one of those choices.

- **Joshua 24:15** *"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*
- **Deuteronomy 30:19** *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live..."*
- **John 1:11-12** *He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*
- **Acts 2:21** *Romans 10:13 Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.*

Judgment

If the only fact involved in determining leaders is God's predestined choice, then why was Israel judged and sent into captivity for, among other things, setting up bad kings and appointing bad leaders? Addressing the Northern Kingdom through the prophet Hosea (8:4), God said, *"They have set up kings, but not by Me; they have appointed princes, but I did not know it."*

Of course, the phrase *I did not know it*, does not mean God lost His omniscience. It is a metaphor meaning

God did not direct them to set up those kings. Did He predetermine them? Yes. Were they part of His sovereign plan? Yes. But God said the reason Israel had bad kings was because *they have set up kings, but not by Me.*

Remember, God had both an individual and corporate commitment to Israel. So, all of Israel was judged for the people who established bad kings and appointed bad leaders. In our age, God has expressed no corporate commitment to the Gentile nations. But we all have individual accountability.

Morality

The reality of free will allows us to answer the question about voting, even though all *authorities are established by God*. The reason is because it expresses our morality, our sense of right and wrong, our concept of holiness, righteousness, and the value of truth.

Does that mean we should always vote? Not necessarily. In an American presidential election, it usually comes down to two viable candidates. We should vote for the better candidate. But if we determine both candidates are bad or both would do things that are bad, then we should not vote for either of them. Regardless, as believers, we will be held accountable at the Judgment Seat of Christ for all our decisions, including how we vote, or if we vote (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 2:16; 14:10, 12).

Conclusion

Why vote? Because our vote is as an expression of our own moral values.