

# WORLDVIEW INSIGHTS: LEADERS, POLITICS, THE CHURCH, AND BELIEVERS



Every level of society requires leaders. Therefore, every level of society is impacted by the quality of the leaders in place. From our homes to our churches, from government to the courts, from business to education, from the military to sports teams, from retail to manufacturing—leadership is required at every level of society.

When good leaders are in place, people are protected, good causes can advance, discord is minimized, needs are met, wise decisions are made, good laws are created, society is well governed, and people have an opportunity to flourish. The opposite is also true. When bad leaders are in place, everyone suffers.

### What does Scripture tell us about good leaders?

#### Good leaders are...

- Wise (Proverbs 8:15-16; 11:14; 28:2)
- Knowledgeable (Proverbs 28:2)
- Godly (Proverbs 29:2, 16)
- Honest (Proverbs 17:26)
- Self-controlled (Proverbs 16:14-15)
- Learners (Proverbs 25:3)
- Discerning (Proverbs 16:10)
- Righteous (Proverbs 20:28)
- Faithful (Proverbs 29:14)

#### Good leaders...

- Hate corruption (Proverbs 28:16)
- Strive for excellence (Proverbs 29:8)
- Seek wise counsel (Exodus 18; 2 Samuel 17; 1 Kings 12; Proverbs 15:22)
- Motivate instead of manipulate (Nehemiah 2:17-20; Proverbs 16:10)
- Deal with problems (Proverbs 20:26; 28:2; Titus 3:10-11)
- Act instead of react (Proverbs 16:14-15; 29:12; Matthew 18:15-17)
- Live with integrity (Psalm 78:72; Proverbs 16:13)
- Balance truth and love (Proverbs 20:28; 1 Corinthians 13)
- Submit to God (Proverbs 21:1)
- Confront sin (Proverbs 16:12; Galatians 2:11-14)
- Serve others (1 Kings 12:7; Matthew 20:25-28)
- Care about the poor and needy (Psalm 72:12-14)
- Surround themselves with wise counselors (Proverbs 11:14)
- Educate and delegate (Exodus 18)

## When good leaders are in place, they bring...

- Stability (Proverbs 28:2)
- Gladness (Proverbs 28:12)
- Rejoicing (Proverbs 29:2)

## What does Scripture tell us about bad leaders?

#### Bad leaders are...

- Foolish (1 Samuel 13:13; Proverbs 28:15-16; Ecclesiastes 10:16-20)
- Wicked (Proverbs 28:12, 15, 28; 29:2)
- Dangerous (Proverbs 28:15)
- Without understanding (Proverbs 28:16)
- Impatient (1 Samuel 13:8-12)
- Prideful (Daniel 5:20-30)
- Open to lies (Proverbs 29:12)

#### Bad leaders...

- Make rash decisions (1 Samuel 14:24)
- Rely on their wisdom and not God's (1 Samuel 14:37)
- Trust human resources instead of God (Isaiah 31:1)
- Listen to falsehood (Proverbs 29:12)

# When bad leaders are in place, they...

- Topple governments (Proverbs 28:2)
- Bring ruin to nations (Proverbs 28:2)
- Encourage moral rot (Proverbs 28:2)
- Allow sin to flourish (Proverbs 29:16)
- Instill fear (Proverbs 28:12, 28)
- Are dangerous to poor people (Proverbs 28:15)
- Bring oppression to all people (Proverbs 28:16)

# Psalm 72 gives us qualities to look for in political leaders.

# The ideal political leader is someone who...

- Upholds justice and integrity (vv. 1-2)
- Defends the vulnerable (v. 4)
- Serves the needy (vv. 12-13)
- Stands against oppression (v. 14)

A good leader's time in office is refreshing like "showers that water the earth" (v. 6) and brings prosperity to the land (vv. 3, 6, 16). And while Messiah (Jesus) is the only one who can perfectly fulfill the role (v. 11), it is the standard we work toward.

# # 1: God ordained the institutions of government and the church, but each one has a different purpose.

- Government's authority is derived from God. (Romans 13:1)
- Government's role is to protect the innocent and punish the wicked—to preserve order and promote justice. (Romans 13:3-4)
- Godly leaders bless people; wicked leaders hurt people. (Proverbs 29:2)

#### Christians are called to...

- Respect and honor government leaders. (Romans 13:7)
- Be subject to government and obey its laws. (Romans 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13-14)
- Pray for leaders. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- Pay taxes. (Matthew 22:17-21; Romans 13:6-7)

#### Politics flows downstream of culture.

- The government's primary role is to protect the innocent and punish the wicked.
- The church's role involves proclaiming the gospel, making disciples, being salt and light, engaging the mission, living with a kingdom mindset, and working so that God's glory is displayed among the nations.

# # 2: Government operates with the "imperfectability of human judgment."

#### That leads to three conclusions:

- 1) Do not expect perfect leaders.
- 2) Do not expect a perfect government.
- 3) Our governing documents need to account for and guard against the sinfulness of the human condition.

# # 3: The church has one primary message (the gospel) and one primary allegiance (God's kingdom).

When the true gospel of Jesus is preached, it does not conform to party platforms, toe party lines, or yield to any superior worldview. The church cannot abandon the gospel message to promote political talking points. At the same time, we cannot abandon the political concerns in this life. Politics impacts people, and God has called the church to reach, care for, and love people.

# # 4: When the Bible is taught faithfully, we will address politically charged topics because these topics flow out of the human condition.

Politics addresses many topics found in Scripture. There is an overlap between politics and the church because both deal with people. As a result, teaching Scripture will define marriage, address human sexuality, and describe humans being made in God's image. Scripture exhorts us to seek justice and care for the poor. Scripture gives us God's will on debt, capital punishment, crime, parental rights, morality, punishing the guilty, protecting the innocent, God's design for the family, and so much more. If a church teaches Scripture, they will address politically charged topics. It doesn't make the church political; it makes them biblically faithful.

# #5: The policies we advocate should have biblical support, and our ultimate vote should reflect that position.

Politically speaking, a policy is a course or principle of action that is adopted or proposed by a party or candidate. Each candidate will advocate for multiple policies (i.e. social policies, economic policies, environmental policies, foreign affairs, etc.). These policies are often combined in their party's platform.

Party platforms are usually 50 to 75 pages in length. They typically start with the vision of the group, an overview of the state of the nation, and an outline of the major problems that must be addressed. Platforms show how a particular political party hopes to tackle the problems. By producing this document, the political party informs the public about its intent and gives incoming officials a policy roadmap for what they're to do if their party wins.

When it comes to a candidate's political platform...

- We need to know what policies it includes.
- We need to evaluate those policies in light of Scripture.
- Our ultimate vote should be as closely aligned to a biblical worldview as possible.

Cancel culture promotes an "all or nothing" approach to people and platforms. Discerning and wise believers should be able to say, "I agree with certain policies because they align with Scripture. I disagree with other policies because they do not align with Scripture. I'm voting for this person because this candidate/platform captures more values that align with a biblical worldview."

# # 6: Thoughtful voting takes time, but it gives greater confidence that your decisions reflect a biblical worldview.

Voting is very similar to interviewing someone for a job. The candidate is applying for a job. The public acts as a hiring committee. It's the responsibility of the public to look over a candidate's résumé, platform, life, and abilities and see which candidate best fits the position. As with all hiring, it's good to look at each candidate from multiple angles.

This voting grid is designed to help you look at each candidate from multiple, applicable angles. Most of these points are based on attributes of good leaders found in Scripture. Based on the position, you may need to adjust the grid. However, most categories apply to all voting scenarios.

Also, it may be helpful to score each category on a 1-10 grading scale (with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best). These numbers will be somewhat subjective. Answer honestly based on the reliable information.

On a scale of 1-10, how would you evaluate the candidate in the following areas?			
	<b>Character:</b> Does the candidate have good or poor character? On a leadership level, how closely does the candidate's character align with the attributes of good leaders in Scripture? On a personal level, how closely does the candidate's life align with Scripture?		
	<b>Counsel:</b> Who is surrounding the candidate? Are there voices of reason, wisdom, and godliness around the candidate that can help them make good decisions and turn from poor decisions?		
	<b>Consequences:</b> Based on the candidate's history, campaign promises, and party platform, what do they plan to do in office? What are the foreseeable consequences if the candidate is elected?		
	<b>Competency:</b> Does the candidate have the knowledge, ability, and experience to do what's being asked? Do they know what they're doing?		
	<b>Consistency:</b> What is the candidate's track record? Do they flip-flop on issues, keep their word, or finish what they start?		
	<b>Causes:</b> What causes or policies does the candidate stand for or against? Do their causes or policies align with Scripture?		
	<b>Cumulative Impact:</b> Can the candidate take incremental steps to move the needle forward in key areas?		
	<b>Constitutional Convictions:</b> Does the candidate value and support the Constitution they're swearing to uphold?		
	<b>Constituents:</b> Does the candidate care for the well-being of those they represent? Do they listen to needs and advocate for those they represent?		
	<b>Country:</b> Will the candidate work toward what is best for the country?		

# **Next Steps:**

- Choose to be informed.
- Do your research early.
- Ask questions from those with different views.
- Continue to engage in worldview considerations.
- Love people regardless of their affiliation, position, or beliefs.
- Engage locally—and that doesn't stop at the voting booth.

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## **Prayer**

As we complete our analysis of those running for office, please spend some time praying for those who are and will be leading us. Here are some passages to help guide your prayer time.

# Pray for government leaders to...

- Be wise and knowledgeable (Proverbs 11:14; 28:2)
- Be godly (Proverbs 28:12)
- Hate corruption (Proverbs 28:16)
- Be surrounded by wise counsel (Exodus 18; 2 Samuel 17; 1 Kings 12; Proverbs 15:22)
- Motivate and not manipulate (Nehemiah 2:17-20; Proverbs 16:10)
- Not tolerate wrongdoing (Proverbs 16:12; Galatians 2:11-14)
- Have integrity (Proverbs 16:13)
- Keep their emotions under control (Proverbs 16:14-15)
- Strive for excellence (Proverbs 20:8)
- Deal with troublemakers (Proverbs 20:26; Titus 3:10-11)
- Balance truth and love (Proverbs 20:28; 1 Corinthians 13)
- Submit to God (Proverbs 21:1)
- Deal with problems (Proverbs 28:2)
- Act, not react (Proverbs 29:12; Matthew 18:15-17)





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