

# Top Ten Reasons It Is Good to Get Involved in Politics

What if instead of seeing politics as an obligation to be fulfilled we saw it as a cultural good to be pursued? Here are ten reasons to see political involvement that way:

**#1. It enables us to care about something that God cares about.** Psalm 24 says, *"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it"* (NIV). When God created human beings to bear his image and become stewards of the earth, He said it was *"very good"* - the best of all possible goods. God cares about what happens in the human community. Even when the people of Israel's disobedience led to their defeat and exile, God spoke to them through the prophet Jeremiah: *"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare"* (Jeremiah 29:7). God cares about what happens in our communities. We should too .

**#2. It is one way we can disciple the nations.** Jesus said in Matthew 28:18-20 that we are to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey God in every area of life. Getting involved in decisions for our community enables us to teach people who make influential decisions how to obey God. Most Christians feel guilty about not discipling others. When you get involved in politics, you immediately find yourself in the company of people who care about their town, their state, and their nation. It is a privilege to enter into this kind of vibrant community as a disciple who presents solutions based on biblical principles that best represent the contours of the world as it actually exists.

**#3. It gives us the opportunity to stand against evil.** James A. Garfield, the 20th president of the United States, said, *"The people are responsible for the character of their Congress. If that body be ignorant, reckless, and corrupt, it is because the people tolerate ignorance, recklessness, and corruption."* In history, governments not based on Christian virtue were prone to drive their own citizens into misery and deprivation. According to historian R.J. Rummel in *Death by Government*, 170 million men, women, and children lost their lives in the 20th century at the hands of governments that explicitly denied the existence of God and the value of the Christian ethic. Standing against evil helps alleviate the suffering of others, and it causes us to grow more resilient in courage.

**#4. It enables us to follow a long, honorable biblical tradition.** The Bible is not a guide to political action *per se*, but it provides many illustrations of how believers changed society through political engagement:

- Joseph preserved a nation through seven years of drought because of his foresight and planning.
- Esther rescued her people from genocide by appealing to a powerful king.
- Daniel served faithfully in a pagan government and maintained a godly witness that inspired his people through decades of captivity.

Biblical heroes didn't become heroes by avoiding evil, but by exhibiting a strong faith in the midst of intolerable conditions.

**#5. Following in the footsteps of world-changers is exciting.** I don't know about you, but I love to hear the inspiring stories of those whose Christian convictions brought about remarkable changes in what seemed like impossible situations. By their hard work and perseverance through adversity, Christian heroes brought us hospitals, civil liberties, the abolition of slavery, modern science, the elevation of women, regard for human life, great works of art and literature, a workable system of justice, education for common people, the free enterprise system, and much more. The application of biblical principles makes society better - who wouldn't want to be a part of that?

**#6. It's a simple way to obey God's authority.** One of the lessons of Scripture is that if you want to *have* authority, you must be *under* authority. Matthew 8 reveals how Jesus' obedience to God was the source of his authority. In this account a Roman centurion appealed to Jesus to heal his servant: "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. *For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me*" (emphasis added).

The centurion knew that his power came from obedience to Caesar, and he reasoned that in a similar way Jesus' authority came from His obedience to God. Jesus affirmed this by saying, "*Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith.*" Jesus was empowered by God's authority. We, in turn, are empowered by Jesus' authority (John 16:10). In Romans 13 the apostle Paul connects obedience to God's authority and our obedience to civil authority. The application in America is unique: we the people are the rulers, so the only way to obey God's authority is to take our civic responsibilities seriously.

**#7. It helps us become more Christ-like.** If government is part of the order God has created, then to choose not to be involved is to refuse some of the means by which God intends to grow us to be more like His son. So how can political involvement help us become more like Christ? Consider these three for starters:

- **Thoughtfulness.** In politics we have to consider the viewpoints of those we disagree with, which builds patience.
- **Humility.** We realize that our capacity for creating change is truly limited, which builds trust in God's sovereignty.
- **Perspective.** We realize that there are no perfect choices in a fallen world, which forces us to prayerfully discern the proper course when there seem to be no good options.

**#8. Good citizenship sets an example for generations to come.** As with Thomas Paine, we must say, "If there must be trouble, let it be in my day that my child may have peace." You may not feel capable of preparing the rising generation, but you *can* and *must* do it anyway. Our future leaders need more than TV personalities or sports heroes or superstars; they need real people like *you*.

The *Political Animal* video course reveals the results of a study into the lives of great influencers, showing that each one of them had an influential mentor who unleashed their talents. John 12:24 says, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*" Are you willing to die to yourself to enable rising generations to proclaim God's glory throughout the earth?

**#9. It helps build public virtue.** It's not enough merely to refrain from bad behavior. No one has ever received a good citizenship award by virtue of disciplining himself to not rob convenience stores. Public virtue means choosing to do good at personal expense. One of the ideas on which America is based is the biblical notion of public virtue. The focus is not "Avoid doing *bad* to those who harm you," but "Do *good* to those who harm you." Hundreds of millions of people around the world have been set free through the application of this principle. Politics offers a platform from which to encourage virtue, and virtue is at the heart of good government.

**#10. It gives us a sense of gratefulness.** It is a great irony that people express their cynicism about politics without fear of arrest in a country where that freedom was secured through political deliberation. They completely forget that the comfort of their own homes, the safety of their neighborhoods, the orderliness of their communities, and their access to goods and services are maintained through wise policies regarding public safety, community development, and economic growth. Political involvement isn't merely a duty - it's a privilege. It isn't just something we have to do out of obligation - it's a way to grow as people, live more meaningful lives, and leave a legacy.

Want to learn more? In my six-session video course *The Political Animal: Debunking the Myths that Keep Christians from Becoming More Like Christ - and Changing the World - Through Political Involvement*, you'll learn how to give persuasive, biblical arguments to your friends and fellow church-goers so together you can exert a godly influence on your community, state, and nation. More at <http://www.summit-courses.org/political>