

Assemblies - Politics – myfishbites.com

(Links checked January 2019)

First Up

You may want to use this in conjunction with the [Assembly on the 10 Commandments..](#)

Question

Who is interested in politics? I bet if I asked this question, hardly anyone would put their hand up. Truth is that younger people are less likely to vote than older people. But we should vote. These statistics are from [ipsos.com](#)

2015 General Election	
Ages	% Voting
18-24	43%
25-34	54%
35-44	64%
45-54	72%
55-64	77%
65+	78%

OK so you have to be over 18 to be able to vote. But does that mean that politics doesn't affect you? As a Christian, I believe it's really important you have your voice..

[Democracy.ru](#) – Find some quotes on democracy, elections etc on this page.

Edmund Burke: "All that is necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good men to do nothing."

While this quote is aimed at stopping evil men succeed, I think we can apply this to using our vote, letting our voice be heard on issues that are important to us...

An example of something important happening through involvement in politics is a skate park created in part of the city where I live which happened because of the hard work of a youth worker who worked alongside a group of young people (some who were tough characters). They met the local councillor, talked to the police, did surveys of young people and residents and kept on going until the skate park happened.

Voting Issues

What do people most care about when they vote..

2017 UK Election – Key issues on the Sky News website

- Health
- Defence
- Economy
- Education
- Brexit
- Welfare
- Immigration

Some key issues for younger voters as identified by The Guardian (2017)

- Technological disruption
- Mental health
- Gender equality
- Schools and skills
- Employment opportunities
- Higher education
- Environment
- Reduction in voting age

Question

What other issues would be important to you? (Hands up or not)

(These are just some ideas. Use your own as appropriate...)

- More facilities and funding for schools
- More and better services for young people
- Concerns over bullying
- Crime and cyber crime– better equipment in schools
- Better opportunities for young people
- More investment in youth services and agencies supporting young people's issues
- More people that look out for you and you can talk to.
- Environmental concerns and recycling

The Bible and Politics

Tony Blair (British Prime Minister from 1994 – 2007) said that faith should be kept out of politics. But this is very wrong – politics and faith can't be kept apart any more than what you believe can be kept apart from politics. It doesn't make sense!

As just one example, in one area of my city, a local church kept a youth centre open after funding stopped from the local council due to budget shortages. The youth centre has become a community centre for all kinds of groups. This is an example of the church getting involved in politics and allowing their faith to impact what they do.

In the Bible, here are just some of the things God said:

– CITIZENSHIP –

Romans 13.1 – Be a good citizen. All governments are under God. Insofar as there is peace and order, it's God's order. So live responsibly as a citizen.

– MONEY AND TAXES –

Romans 13.6 – That's also why you pay taxes--so that an orderly way of life can be maintained. Fulfill your obligations as a citizen. Pay your taxes, pay your bills, respect your leaders.

– PRAYING FOR PEACE –

1 Tim 2.1-3 – The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Saviour God wants us to live.

– LOOKING OUT FOR THE POOR, NEEDY, THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS –

Zechariah 7:10 – Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.'

Micah 6:8 – He (God) has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

James 1.27 – Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

- LOVE -

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 – Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not selfseeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

- IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES -

Exodus 22:21 – Don't mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt.

Exodus 23:9 – Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt.

Leviticus 19:34 – The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

Christian Faith and Politics

Many issues and modern day things we have – are there because of Christians taking a stand, making changes, helping people, fighting for the rights of the poor and the needy. Here are just a few examples... (get images on screen)

End to Slavery in the UK – issue first raised by Society of Friends (Quakers / Methodists) then helped to be ended by a Christian called William Wilberforce. Incredible work.

Prison Reform – Elizabeth Fry did great work, first with women prisoners and their children, initiating prison reform for them, and then also for male prisoners. She also set up District Visiting Societies to work with the poor, libraries for coastguards, a training school for nurses and help for homeless women and children

Lord Shaftesbury – factory reform, legislation to help women and stop under 13s working in factories, also helped Florence Nightingale on army and nursing reforms, set up schools in inner cities to help poor children.

Nursing Care – Florence Nightingale is a famous female pioneer with nursing care within the army / military hospitals. She wrote letters home for the troops and showed real love and concern for them. She also then set up the first nursing training college, raising standards to higher levels. She also had a big impact on public health.

Dedication of America – on many occasions, the founding fathers and those who set up governments and states were motivated very directly, even solely, because of their faith in God – [for more click here \(flash required\)](#).

Abraham Lincoln – one of the most famous Presidents of the USA (1861–65) had faith in God, prayed, and included God in many of his statements and things that he did. ([Click here for more](#)). (Note the first President was George Washington, 1789–97). Of course, George Bush, the current US President also has a faith in God.

Did you also know that many hospitals, schools, orphanages, housing and more – were driven by Christians who felt a really strong desire from God to help people – and help people help themselves to change bad situations. This still happens today across the world. Even where things are not Christian, the principles can be summed up by Jesus..

[Mark 12:29–31 \(New International Version\)](#) – “The most important commandment,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Now just imagine a world where people lived this way!

Can I take action?

Yes. Are there issues you feel concerned about? Write to your local politician or councillor. Talk to someone about how you feel. Get involved in organisations that are trying to help people positively. There may be other ways you can make a difference. Talk to a youth worker, a teacher or someone you trust.