



Storming Fortresses

For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,
but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:4

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The man who clings to these vices will never be a true covenant head at home. Thus, he will never be a true covenant head in any office.

Politicians are reluctant to teach the people because to do so they must expose their thinking and their ideas.

Of Politics and Politicians

Or
Do We Vote and For Whom Do We Vote?
Part V

By
Murray McLeod-Boyle

Toward a Biblical Standard

In this final part it is our aim to put forward Biblical criteria for leadership. Many questions have been left unanswered as they fall outside of the scope of this series. For example, varying arguments exist as to the type of political model that should be adopted. Notwithstanding, any model, to be considered Biblical, must have at its foundation certain universal moral, ethical and theocratic principles. In other words, whether you believe in Monarchy or Republicanism certain tenets hold true. Without these

tenets the model is doomed to corruption and failure. More importantly, the model will result in either tyranny or anarchy without these mores.

Hence, we pray that the first four parts may have convinced the reader that Christians should be involved in politics. We say this on the basis that it is a legitimate area of endeavour, no different from being a shopkeeper, miner, or housewife. We also pray that the texts placed before you and the accompanying comments helped to show that the common negative perceptions about kingdom and politics are unwarranted.

With these issues settled, we would like to offer practical advice and also place a challenge before you. These principles are sound because, and only because, they come from the text of Scripture. Yet, *to be effective they need to be acted upon.* Today Christianity suffers from a lack of positive action. It seems to be a forgotten aspect of the Reformation that much of the impetus came from a certain gentleman (or not in some people's opinion) who nailed a set of theses to a door. Whilst there were other factors present, it cannot be denied that this *simple action* had significant ramifi-

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adultery at work. God does not demand good bookkeeping for the family budget and allow embezzlement from an employer. The standard is the same. Morality is not conditioned upon the office exercised. God's demands upon a man are the same for the individual as they are for the public office.

Therefore, we must take heed to this principal. In a recent article directed at the shooters of our nation, this same point was made. They often approach politicians and ask for their position on firearms. This is usually where the questions stop.

Christians are no different. We will ask if a politician believes in God or abortion or some single issue, then our questions stop. We never ask the politician if he has raised good kids. We do not ask, Does this politician have a good marriage? We do not ask, Has this politician ever demanded more than pens and paper from his secretary. We do not ask, Does this politician abuse his expense account?

No, to do so is considered tacky. It is to be a guttersnipe. These things are supposedly below the Christian. Yet these are the very tests that the Bible would demand the politician to meet long before he was elected.

The family is the central government in society. God has made it that way for a reason. If you cannot remain faithful to the woman you love, how do you remain faithful to strangers? If the marriage oath you have taken before God and witnesses, to forsake all others, means nothing, then what credibility do we give any oath taken for public office? If you cannot or will not understand the current issues within your family, how will you understand issues that are at arms length? If you bury your family to fulfil a selfish dream, what will stop you burying your public supporters for the same reason? If you

stop your ears to the cries of your children, what makes you think you will open them to the clamouring hordes? If you take little interest in your child's education, how will you educate others? If you do not believe in discipline, the consequence of which is rebellious children, what gives you the right to unleash that rebellion on a grander scale? May it never be! Prove it or lose it. Take the test or give your political ambition a rest.

If you cannot make home a success, then give up any and every aspiration to a public office.

This principle is of such importance that it should not surprise any to find that when Paul compiles a list of qualifications for Eldership (Church Government), he looks directly at the family. Says Paul:

He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?);

And again

...having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.¹

This focus is one which the world does not share, *to its own detriment*. The Scriptures say, "Examine the man at home to see if he is fit to hold office." Humanism says, "It matters not what a man is at home, only how he conducts his public affairs." In saying this, humanism posits that a man can be two complete opposites without the slightest hint of compromise. This is a lie. For verification of this phenomenon ask the former President of the United States, Bill Clinton. The whole Monica Lewinsky scandal revolved around this very issue. What happened behind closed doors was of no consequence

cations.

Thus we are asking you to consider some *simple actions* in your life. We will often stand around and complain to each other about various aspects of our lives, but we very seldom do anything about. If the second Reformation is to occur, we too must be willing to act.

With this in mind we put forward the following principles, with the idea that you take a very hands on approach to the upcoming federal election (November 2001) and to any sphere where you are required to take part in the installation of a leader.

1. The Familial Training Ground

Scripture clearly teaches that the family is the central unit of society. What is therefore true for the family (government) must also hold true for other governmental roles. This is true because God is not a hypocrite. He does not believe in double standards, turning a blind eye, or in receiving kickbacks. God does not demand fidelity of a man at home and allow

¹ 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6.

to what happened in public—or so the media and certain others were saying. The failure of the government to impeach Clinton showed that this idea had become entrenched.

Nevertheless, in the long run, the Biblical position was proven to be true. Sure, the Americans ignored this aspect as best they could, but the truth was there for all to see. Clinton, like that other famous Democratic icon, was known to have a certain weakness. Vetted according to Scripture, Clinton would not have made it to office; this scandal would not have happened; and the American system would probably be a little more respected than it now is.

Even the current President, George W. Bush, would do well to heed this Biblical mandate. He is known as a “hard liner.” As we write this, in the shadow of September 11, this man is speaking of retribution and retaliation. Yet, he has a daughter who has twice been cited for drinking under age. On the last occasion she was in the company of her government minders. Nice, isn’t it. Daddy’s henchmen were keeping her safe while she broke the law.²

What a man is at home, he will be in public, no matter how much he tries to hide it. This is the fundamental principle to which we must return regardless of the office in question. If we persist in neglecting this principle, we are going to continue in a downward trend. If our country is to rise, it must do so, and indeed will only do so, through the elevation of ethical, moral, and spiritual qualities within candidates.

Therefore, our very first sugges-

tion is this: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Do not ask special interest questions and then stop. Ask moral questions. We hope you would not elect an elder or deacon simply because he shares your interest in jigsaw puzzles. Why, then, would you elect a politician on this basis?

2. Characteristics of Worth

Continuing with Paul’s standards we note his emphasis upon personal qualities. According to 1 Timothy 3, elders must be:

the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable ... not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money....And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Similarly, Titus 1 says elders must be:

above reproach, the husband of one wife ... above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible³, just, devout, self-controlled.

These moral and character traits are important. We note at the outset that monogamy stands at the head of both lists. Once more the idea of the private man being the public figure is brought to the fore. Also of importance, the issue of a wife brings the concept of covenant and headship

into clear focus. To modern minds these concepts are either unknown or simply spurned. Headship in particular is a term that is out of vogue. If you want to see women choke, spit saliva, and froth at the mouth, all at once, ask your wife to go to the local feminist society and mention the “H” word. According to feminists the “H” word should be substituted with the word ‘doormat.’ All men who believe in headship are merely repressionists who presume women are to be treated as slave girls.

‘Oh contrary, Ms Feminist. Headship is about caring for a woman. Cherishing her. Loving her. Protecting her. Nurturing her.’ True headship knows nothing of a doormat mentality. What headship knows and understands is that it has a responsibility to this other human being in the highest possible terms. Covenant headship knows courage, selflessness, devotion, sacrifice, discipline, grace, law, and love. This is exactly why Paul lists the traits that he does. The pugnacious man will not walk away when he should. He will drag the fight out. The drunkard has no self-control or self-respect. How will he control or respect others? The one who loves money will be the target of a bribe. The one who loves sordid gain will be the recipient of a bribe. The bribe distorts justice, undermines law, and destroys society.⁴

The man who clings to these vices will never be a true covenant head at home. Thus, he will never be a true covenant head in any office. Oh, he might be the great pretender. Nonetheless, in time his deeds will bring the truth to light. More likely, a scan-

2. We should also note the Australian scene. Bob Hawke had a daughter addicted to drugs. It was also a well know fact that Bob Hawke himself had an alcohol problem. Shortly after leaving office his marriage failed. Ian Smith was a Liberal politician in the Victorian parliament. He was divorced and his mistress was expecting a child to him. This all became very public with various nasty allegations being made by both parties involved. It involved court battles and it made news for quite a while. Yet Mr. Smith retained his job. He eventually resigned in 1995 when an advisor proceeded against him with a law suit

3. The term “temperate” in 1 Timothy and the term “sensible” used in Titus both translate the same Greek word.ˆ

4. See: Exodus 23:8; Deuteronomy 10:17; 16:19; 27:25; Proverbs 17:23; Ecclesiastes 7:7; Psalm 15:5; Micah 3:11; 7:3.

dal will bring these things to light and people will be dismayed, horrified, dejected. Their trust will be betrayed. Their confidence in elected officials will dwindle. The candidates will then put on a better show. The people will again fail to judge correctly. They will once more be dejected, horrified, dismayed. Their confidence will sink further. This time they simply will not care who gets the job because all trust has been betrayed.

Does it sound familiar?

Therefore, our second suggestion is: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Not only ask moral questions but seek moral answers. If you ask the question, analyse the answer. Do not be fooled by politicians talk.

3. Party Politics = The Claytons Politician

Beware of “party politics.” When you seek your answers to your moral question, ask a further question, namely, Is this your position or the party’s position? In party politics, the individual’s position is swallowed. He can tell you one thing and then vote for something completely different, all because the party tells him to.

Let us return to the “Gun Confiscation” again. We remember distinctly certain back-benchers raising the concerns of their electorate. The politicians listened to their people and the people were saying, “We do not want this!” The response? Certain front-benchers put their face in front of the camera and stated pointedly that these guys should leave the kitchen if they could not control their constituents. Other comments went along the lines of not bowing to a bunch of “red-necks.”

This, ladies and gentlemen, is our esteemed “party political” system. The politicians were not allowed to

represent their constituents. No! The party was there to tell the constituents what it was they were to believe! Silly us. All this time we thought we elected people to represent us! Now we know. We elect people to tell us what it is that we should believe.

Growing up we were often told that the events of life are often funnier than comedy shows. If you want proof that this is true, hire a copy of the BBC show, “Yes, Minister.” The appeal of this show is that we can all relate to it as part of life. The appalling aspect of this show is that we laugh at the duplicity, the underhanded tactics, the half meanings, the manipulation, and the lack of truth. Politics is portrayed as a game through which one gains the upperhand.

Now, our intention is not to stop you from watching this show. We too enjoy a laugh at the antics portrayed. What we are seeking to do is make you aware of what is being presented. Too often we imbibe these things without critically examining the content. In this show we laugh at circumstances that, in our daily life, often cause us grief and angst. Party politics is destructive. We must see it removed. By this we do not mean that political parties cannot exist. What we are urging is that the list of party criteria be diminished and the conscience vote extended.

Therefore, the third suggestion is: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Then, ask them if they are, according to Paul list, prudent, just, and devout. In other words, can they discern the pitfalls in “Party Politics” (Prudence)? Do they have the moral ability to discern correctly (Just or Righteous)? Last of all, knowing what is right, will they “stick to their guns” and not cave in to “party” pressure (Devout)? If you do not get reliable answers, then look for another candidate.

Answers built upon a plasticine base should not give you comfort. Answers given by a plasticine candidate should give you even less comfort.

4. Teach!

Paul also lists the ability to “teach” or “hold fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”⁵

Yes, we admit that in reference to the Church these aspects are probably more important. This does not mean, however, that they are of no use to politics. Earlier in this series we inserted quotations referring to the Civil Magistrate. Common to both was the idea that these people ruled by God’s standard.

If the Confessions are correct, then political leaders should be able to teach and exhort in sound doctrine. Even if people believe that this is not applicable, the idea of leaders being teachers is important.

First, any teacher worth his salt will lead by example. He will carry out and execute personally the very standards he sets for others. Second, when we were growing up we all experienced the “‘cause I told you so”, clause. It did not do much to inspire us. We wanted to know why an action was right or wrong. If there was evidence we wanted to see it. Most parents saw this as rebellion, rather than a desire to understand.

Politicians are very often guilty of the “‘cause I told you so”, clause. It may not spill from their mouths in this very form, but the intent is nevertheless the same. Primarily, this is a shield. It either means a person cannot explain their beliefs and actions, or they will not explain themselves.

In either case, it seems that a greater understanding on the part of politicians would lead to a greater

⁵ 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9 respectively.

ability on their part to teach the people. This in turn, we believe, would make the country, state, and city run more smoothly.

Politicians are reluctant to teach the people because to do so they must expose their thinking and their ideas. Most importantly, they would need to expose their goals. This they are unwilling to do because it opens them to questions and criticism. It means that some lowly, non-elected, plebeian may, in fact, have a better and more sound concept that warrants far more attention than that which the pollies have put forward. This would then mean that the pollies would have to eat copious amounts of that particular type of pie with lashings of humility.

As the politicians of our day are not willing to confront such a procedure, we are unlikely to see this soon. If the politicians were “respectable”, as Paul asks them to be, then there would not be a problem with teaching. They would be unafraid because they would not have skeletons to cover; it would not become apparent that the real goal is different to the stated goal; nor would it come to light that these guys do not have any clue as to what is really going on, apart from the words that appear on the carefully crafted script given to them by the person or persons unknown standing in the shadows.

Therefore, our fourth suggestion is: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Then pretend you do not understand the answer. Then ask them to teach you exactly what is meant by that particular answer. Their response to the question should be enlightening in itself.

5. Peter's Words

So that people do not think that Paul is the only one with anything to say on this subject, let us turn to the words of Peter. In 1 Peter 5:1-5 we read:

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for **GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**

Peter, rather than giving a straight forward list, tends to give comparisons. First of all the Apostle challenges the leaders to shepherd the flock. We know that the shepherd was to guard and nurture the flock under his care. With this command given, the comparisons begin. Broken down, the text would be viewed as follows:

1. Shepherd the flock! How? In this manner: 2. Voluntarily, not under compulsion; 3. With eagerness and not for sordid gain; 4. Prove yourself an example and do not lord it over your sheep; 5. You young ones respect your elders, but let young and old alike clothe themselves with humility.

Peter's succinct style is very helpful. By starting with the command to shepherd the sheep, he is using a metaphor to forcefully encapsulate the ideas necessary to leadership. Thus no one should be under any delusions as to what leadership entails. To make sure that the message is understood, he adds a list of comparisons. As stated, this is not a simple list with each aspect differing from the one before. Rather, Peter adopts a more legal or ethical stand. To illustrate, we will make reference to the command not to murder. This command

is negative in its form. It says, “Do not murder.” Yet this law has a positive aspect. Implied in the negative command is the positive command. Thus, the command not to murder is equally a command to promote life. A person cannot fulfil this command if he stands by and watches another person be murdered. Sure, he did not violate the negative command, but he certainly transgressed the positive. He did not take life, neither did he protect it. Peter follows this type of formula. He first states the negative, this is what a shepherd is not. Then he states the positive, this is what the shepherd is and must be.

This usage is very forceful as it leaves little open to interpretation. It is concise. It is to the point.

Peter's list starts with the command to shepherd. This is self explanatory. Items two and three overlap with Paul's statements and underscore the need for leaders to be moral men.

Item four is important. We touched on it previously when looking at the need for leaders to be teachers. In Paul's writing this is simply implied. A teacher must necessarily live out his claims if he is to be credible. Here, we are commanded to be an example. There is no escape from this weighty obligation.

The import again is critical. Our number one, all important, point that heads our list is, “Examine the man at home!” Look to the home. Has this prospective leader proven himself by his example? If he has not, then the inquiry need go no further. He is not a suitable candidate. He is to lead by example, not stand behind the constituents and beat them into submission. He is to lead by example, not shirk responsibility.

This point must be learnt. Christianity was once fruitful because it had proven itself by example. Whatever else people may have thought, they had seen the good deeds that were consistent with the creeds and were

all very pleased. Now we have abandoned these principles. Through a faulty evangelistic programme, we abandoned righteousness for bridge building. Instead of the ungodly crossing to us, we crossed to them. Now we cry out to the ungodly, "Be saved!" They look at us. They see little or no difference. Then they laugh. The Church was once a family stronghold. Now divorce rates, drug problems, rebellious children, workaholic fathers and a host of other problems are common place. We are no longer leading by example. We are merely following the world.

If we want to have a better society, we need leaders who will lead by example. Leaders who will demonstrate right and wrong in their lives. Men who can point to their family lives as an example. Men who can say with Paul, "Follow me as I follow Christ."⁶ If a candidate does not believe that his life is suitable as an example, then he should leave now!

Last of all, Peter urges that all be clothed with humility. This too is important. Note that the non-elders are asked to respect the elders. This is very good. We should have respect for our leaders. However, as Peter points out, **all** should be clothed with humility. Particular emphasis here is applied to the leaders. Yes, these men deserve respect, but they should not take that to mean that they can act in any manner whatsoever. They are not to lord it over the flock. They are to lead by example. They are to rule in humility.

How many disputes would be avoided if both followers and leaders practiced a little more humility? Humility does not mean compromise. It does not mean that you embrace error for the sake of peace. It means ruling as a man under God's authority. It means ruling as a frail man who can make mistakes. It means understanding that leaders are not perfect, as we who follow are not perfect.

Humility is not about compromising truth. Humility is not at war with truth. Humility upholds truth. The essence of humility is aimed at the human. How will you, not being perfect, apply the truth which is?

Therefore, our fifth suggestion is: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Ask them how they intend to lead. Are they going to stand at the back with a whip or are they going to set the example? Are they going to use their positions to demand respect or are they out to earn respect? Ask them when they last apologised to their wife or children? Oh, and do not accept, "Just the other day!" as a credible answer.

6. Jethro's Advice

For our last example we shall turn to the Old Testament and to Exodus 18:17-23:

And Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good. "You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. "Now listen to me: I shall give you counsel,

and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk, and the work they are to do. "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain;... "And let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear *the burden* with you. "If you do this thing and God *so* commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, he had an enormous responsibility. All Israel came to Moses when they had a dispute. Thus, Moses was being worn out by sitting as judge over Israel all day.

Into this situation comes Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. He has a suggestion, Delegate! Here we come face to face with the Biblical concept of the 'division of labour.' Most notably, it is a principle applied to what we may term, civil government.⁷

In the first instance, Moses remains as *the* representative before God (v 19). So there is no hint that Moses is failing to take his responsibility seriously. Rather, he is enlisting the help of others so that he may complete his vocation with greater competency. How so?, you ask. It is clearly seen in Jethro's words record-

⁶ Unfortunately, it is necessary to add this note here least people misconstrue the intent. People will only follow genuine righteousness when they are born again of the Spirit of God. Notwithstanding, adhering to Godly standards will still bring blessing to a nation and to a household. This is our intent.

⁷ At this stage in Israel's history Civil and Ecclesiastical government are almost indistinguishable. Strictly speaking, Moses is a priest who leads. Later, when the era of the kings dawns, Israel arrives at a true civil government (by modern standards) for the first time. Today we have debates about mixing politics and religion. We are often told about the separation of Church and State. The real question is this, "Is separation of Church and State the same thing as not mixing politics and religion?" Most would say, yes. We would say, no. When Israel's kings ascended the throne they were under a specific obligation: "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests (Deuteronomy 17:18)." There is little hint in this text to say that religion and politics do not go hand in hand. God is not to be absent from government.

ed verse 20. Moses is to teach the people the commandments and statutes of Yahweh so that they may walk in obedience to Him. Moses cannot do this effectively if he is tied up morning and night in being judge over Israel (v 18).

Does this sound familiar? We hope it does. This is exactly the same process that was applied by the Apostles when establishing the diaconate (Acts 6:3-4). When administrative burdens became too much, the Apostles delegated certain tasks to capable men so that they could devote themselves to the Word.

Moses' case is no different. He needs to teach the people the statutes of God. However, he is inhibited in this process by his needing to apply these laws everyday as judge. Yes, he is working with the law. He is applying the law. However, it is only in individual cases. He needs to be able to teach on a much wider basis. The community of Israel needs to hear the Word of the LORD. If Moses is to achieve this goal, he must delegate other responsibilities. To whom do such tasks go? Jethro has the answer.

These men must be:

1. Able men;
2. God fearers;⁸
3. Men of truth; and,
4. Men who hate dishonest gain.

Before looking at these qualities, we would like to digress for a moment. This text is the last text we shall look at. What we would like people to note is the continuity between this text and that which has gone before. Moses penned this text several thousand years before Paul and Peter and yet the content is identical. We raise this as a challenge to those who emphasise a radical discontinuity in God's Word. If the God of the Old is not the God of the New, why do these standards remain essentially the same? If the God of the Old

was gruff and hostile and the God of the new condescending and accepting of everything, why do they demand the same moral and ethical standards of those who lead?

Returning to our text, we are confronted by the fact that the candidate must be able. In the Hebrew this term has a wide variety of meanings. It can be translated as power, wealth, army, valour, or virtue.⁹ Whilst diverse in scope we can nonetheless see the moral quality needed by such a person. These men are to be men of character. They are to be courageous and virtuous. They must be able to make the hard decisions when necessary. They cannot afford to show partiality to a friend nor be overly harsh on an enemy.

Second, they must possess the key ingredient—they must Fear Yahweh! The sage counselled, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” This fear has practical implications. This fear means that one believes the statutes God has given. It assures us of a willingness to apply them. It comforts us by assuring that the unjust will be punished according to them. It frees the righteous from fear of authority—for the sword is appointed to punish the wicked.

Another aspect of the fear of God logically gives birth to our third point, namely, he must be a man of truth. To fear God means a belief in absolutes. It means a belief in right and wrong. It means a belief in truth and error. It means a belief in accountability. Without a shadow of a doubt you will find greater honesty and accountability among those who believe that they will one day give an account for all their decisions. If they see themselves as under authority, they will tend to be more humble and more just. If they deny such accountability, then they have nothing to fear and the door to tyranny is ajar.

Truth of necessity means that one shuns dishonesty, the fourth point. We have already encountered the universal denunciation of this vulgar sin which perverts justice and destroys the innocent. It is not a new doctrine particular to those who live *anno domini*. It is not a high moral, peculiar to the New Testament. No, it is an age old moral. A moral established by God.

Therefore, our fifth suggestion is: Ask moral questions of those you would elect to office. Ask if they are able men—men of valour and virtue. Are they men of truth—truth instilled and fortified by the fear of God. If not, shun this person as a candidate. Are they men who are willing to turn a blind eye? If so, eschew them as a candidate.

Conclusion.

We have been on a journey through the Scriptures together so that we might highlight this most important need. We hope that it is clear that the Christian does have a very real responsibility to the area of politics. If we will not fill these positions or demand righteous leaders, then pagans will stand in the gap.

It is time that we become very serious about this issue. Within months we will be going to a federal election. These words may be too late to have a large impact on the outcome now. However, if people are convinced and committed we can certainly move in the right direction. With this in mind we would like to make a few suggestions:

1. We may need, in the interim, to adopt a sliding scale. Without organised parties and Christian candidates we may need to choose, as it were, the best of a bad bunch. We do not wish to sound a note of compromise in saying this. Rather, our intent is to aim as high as we can, under any

^{8.} These must be men who “Fear God.” This is not the technical term that applied to gentile worshipper/converts.

^{9.} Karl Feyerabend, Langenscheidt's Pocket Hebrew Dictionary (No dates; Germany) 96.

circumstances.

2. If candidates refuse to answer moral questions, then refuse to endorse or vote for them.

3. If candidates tell you that their home life has nothing to do with politics, be skeptical. Politely agree that high degrees of intrusiveness are unwarranted, but firmly assert that the home will tell a good deal about his suitability as a candidate.

4. Think about your questions. Make sure your question asks what you want it to ask. Do not be loose in the choosing of your words. Loose words can give the opportunity to provide a loose answer. Avoid questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” answer or which may have parameters attached. For example, the candidate may answer with a, “Yes!”, when what he means is, “Yes, under certain conditions.” This, of course, is the same as saying, “No, under certain conditions.”

Current examples: Mr. Howard pledged one hundred percent support to America in the wake of the attack on New York. However, this support was always married to the phrase, “to the limit of our capability.” This is a logical statement as one can only go to the limit of one’s capabilities. Yet, in the present case one feels that it is there, not as a matter of logic, but as a matter of diplomacy. Put in everyday language, “it gives us an out.” If the kitchen catches fire, we can run and feel no shame.

Mr. Beazley did exactly the same thing launching his “Knowledge Nation” policy. Fulfilment of the promise was linked to budget. No money! No Promise!

Beware, the appended phrase or the yes / no answer. **Deception may be at hand.**

5. Do not accept waffle or red herring in exchange for real answers.

Make sure you have eaten well before you go, then you will not be tempted by waffle or herring! Beware of that other Australian as well. Under no circumstance should you take money with you. That way no one can “sell you a furphy!”

This is very important. Prospective politicians are trained in being able to field questions. They know how to give involved answers that in essence say absolutely nothing. Consequently, we urge you to do some homework so that you can be prepared. Study polities carefully. You should not have to wait long to see the “pass the buck”, the “duck-shove”, or some other political move.

We cannot be naïve or trusting when we enter upon this process. The days of politicians being trustworthy and upright citizens have gone. Now they are selected for having charismatic personalities or the ability to woo the camera. Thus we must enter these situations with our eyes wide open.

6. In completing this process, one must be prepared to show a steely resolve. One must be aggressive in pursuit of these answers. By this we are not suggesting that you nail the candidates hands to the desk and apply a blowtorch to the buttock region. Rather, we mean that you should not be easily deterred or settle for pat answers. Be polite. Be respectful. Be direct. Let the candidate know that you mean business.

If the candidate is dismissive, scratch them from the list.

7. Do not be afraid to publicise your results. By doing this you wield a greater power and stronger influence.

As to the pitfalls involved, remember this maxim: There is no law against truth! Try to obtain written and signed answers to your ques-

tions. If your interview is oral, try and take a witness. Repeat back answers given so that the candidate has the opportunity to correct something if there is a misunderstanding. At the same time however, take notes. Cover yourself. Do not be naïve. In terms of Biblical principles, ‘Be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves.’ (Matthew 10:16) Remember also that the, ‘the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.’ (Luke 16:8)

The Task

Friends, the time for the second reformation has arrived. Let us put our shoulders to the wheel and not turn back. Let us change nations and see to it that kingdoms fall until our Lord and Christ is acknowledged as the one true King.

The bulk of this article has dealt with the idea of leadership, particularly in the political realm. This is a pressing need. However, of equal need is the idea that we must have present plans to affect the future. Whether these plans be in education, business, politics, farming, environmentalism, jurisprudence or a host of other areas, the essential point is that we have a Biblical plan.

We must cease being passive and become active. In modern parlance, the Church must cease being reactive and become *proactive*. We must begin to make plans unto righteousness. It is time to cease following the world and its concepts. It is time to base our actions upon the wisdom given in Scripture.

Plan! Plan unto righteousness! Plan to bring about a righteous future!

May the God of all glory bless our efforts.