

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## WHY CHRISTIANS MUST VOTE THIS FALL

by Franklin Graham

As the 2018 mid-term elections approach, it's critical that you vote on Election Day, just like so many of us did in 2016. I thank God daily for all the good things that have happened since the last election to protect religious liberty and advocate for Biblical values, which were jeopardized during the previous eight years. But the battle is far from over. In fact, it's just beginning.

Since the election, we have seen career bureaucrats and left-wing politicians on the federal and state levels working with secular-progressive activists to derail any progress made to **restore** religious liberty protections on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage, freedom of conscience and a host of other issues.

If you agree with the progress that's been made, it is absolutely vital for you to vote this November to continue the momentum gained as new laws are introduced protecting people of faith, and as federal judges retire and are replaced.

The right to vote in a free country is a gift from God. We must use the voice we have, or we risk losing it.

As I said at each stop during the 2016 Decision America Tour in all 50 states, just a few votes can make all the difference. In President Trump's first year in office, we saw the abortion-pill mandate within Obamacare turned on its head; new provisions within the Washington bureaucracy to outlaw discrimination of government workers based on sincere religious beliefs; and a rejection of radical transgender bathroom standards in public schools. To top it off, we saw a constitutional conservative placed on the Supreme Court.

These types of victories happened because a large percentage of Christian voters went to the polls in 2016. The plans of secular progressives to continue their assault on people of faith were stopped – but only by a slim margin. (They got stopped on the federal level, so they have turned their sights on state & local levels.)

The Scripture tells us that our spiritual enemy, the devil, seeks to steal, kill and destroy. His work has escalated around the world and, sad to say, many of our politicians have supported the progressive secular movement. Our country is darker and more godless. Meanwhile, secular progressives have tried to redefine God to justify the LGBTQ agenda, anti-God and anti-family ideology, and a culture of death that promotes abortion and euthanasia.

Yet God's people are called to stand in the gap. That means praying with urgency for prospective leaders and leaders already in office. That means taking time to learn how this year's candidates stand on the issues. You might not find a perfect candidate in every race, (in fact, you WILL NOT find a perfect candidate), so you will need to learn which of them stands closer to the values of the Bible.

It will take some effort. But it's vital to you, your children, your grandchildren and the future of our nation. At every level, we need to vote for candidates who are not ashamed to boldly defend Biblical values. I have no faith in the Democrat Party, nor do I have any faith in the Republican Party. The only One who can turn this around is Almighty God.

The freedom to preach the life-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ and to live our lives for Him is under attack like never before, and we must stand together and make sure we vote. I'm not telling you who to vote for – you ask God about that. But be sure to vote. Stand and be counted. Pray like never before. And then go to the polls and vote for candidates who support religious freedom and whose views align with Biblical values.  
–2018BGEA  
(Thank you, Donna Hemingway, for sharing this letter with Cornerstone)

## DON'T EXPECT PERFECTION IN POLITICIANS

(portions excerpted from *afaJournal* September 2018)

Since President Trump ran for president, Christians have debated if we should vote for an imperfect candidate. To state the obvious, THERE IS NO PERFECT CANDIDATE. However, the discussion is based on a false premise: that voting for a person is an endorsement of every action the candidate has taken and every decision he or she has made throughout life. This kind of thinking leads to

frivolous debates among ourselves as to whether our witness is damaged by voting for a less than perfect candidate.

Because politicians, like the rest of us, are human, they will sin and fall short of the glory of God. That said, when a Christian with excellent character runs for office, we should support his or her candidacy. In the 2016 Republican presidential primary, there were several candidates I viewed as Christ followers with a biblical worldview and high level of integrity.

You might ask, what about Democrats? Well, there are some “deal-breaking” issues for me. Abortion is at the top of the list. Any candidate who advocates for the murder of babies in the womb will not get my vote. What would I do if both candidates on the ballot advocated for abortion? Well. We’d be in big trouble. Christians would either vote for a third party or write-in candidate.

Another deal breaker is a candidate who advocates for sexual deviancy (of course, they don’t call it that), including the transgender and homosexual “rights” agenda. Those who promote such are often in favor of the demonization of Christians because of our biblical view of human sexuality. And, unfortunately, this is a common view among Democrats.

I believe that in each election, we have to ask ourselves, “Which candidate’s worldview most closely aligns with the Bible?” That’s the candidate I’m likely to vote for, regardless of whether or not there is a known profession of faith.

But what about someone’s past? I mean the factual past, not the rumored past. There are two questions we have to ask in this situation. Has the person apologized for past actions? Is he the same person, or has he changed? If the candidate has apologized for past behavior and has become a new person, why would you hold one’s past against him? (Would you want your own past behaviors held against you?)

If there isn’t a great candidate, then why don’t Christians just stop voting? Well, this might sound like the purest approach, but it is one that would be regretted. (In fact, we stand where we are because Christians have not gone to the polls in the past and voted for candidates that adhere to biblical values, and now we find ourselves in a mire of godlessness that we must try to correct.) Can you imagine if all Christians had stayed home from the polls in 2016? We’d have a president who approves of abortion and homosexuality. We’d have a president who would appoint judges who completely disregard the Constitution. We’d have a president who would likely take more and more of your hard-earned money for an ever-increasing bureaucracy that has no regard for individual and god-given rights.

This sounds like a nightmare, right? Yet that would be the

presidency we’d have if it weren’t for Christians voting in 2016.

Voting is not a clear-cut moral choice as we’d like, but I’m thankful to God that America still gets to elect her leaders. Many people live under a dictator with little or no freedom. If Christians allow the progressives-socialists to take hold of America – that is what we will have. (Do we want to be like China, Russia, Cuba, Venezuela to name a few.)

There’s a fair amount of friendly fire going on within the Christian community regarding this issue as well. To assume that 86% of evangelical voters are somehow morally bankrupt because they voted for the Republican nominee in 2016 is completely false. We might hold fundamentally different worldviews when it comes to voting and politics, but the last thing we need to do is shoot at each other while SATAN, THE TRUE ENEMY, advances on our position.

Unity is imperative if we Christians are to be the salt and light God calls us to be.

(One final thought – remember that God was able to use Moses, even though he was murderer. He used David, though he was a murderer and an adulterer. And God can use you – even with all your faults/sins. But you must be willing to follow God’s word.) CHOOSE CAREFULLY. And vote to HONOR GOD in 2018!

## THANKSGIVING

### Thoughts based on Luke 17:11-19

THANKSGIVING – A great combination of a secular and sacred holiday. Secular because it is a recognized day in the United States for a holiday, and sacred because of its emphasis upon our basic motivation and response to being Christian – GRATITUDE! In the world we talk about the family, football, or food! But in the church - a house of prayer - we come to worship – and our Thanksgiving has a focus... GOD.

For most of us, Thanksgiving is a time of remembering – to count blessings, to remind ourselves of how good we really have it (even when we feel badly). We have learned to put on a good front, and say the right words.

I’m suggesting that such an approach is rather shallow, bordering on the sacrilegious. The Pharisee was thankful. “I *thank* thee God that I am not like other men...” Our words are similar, “Thank God I am not sick... I am not in prison... hungry. Thank God that I am warm... that I am alive...” No matter how you say it, the emphasis remains... **!**

But there is a difference between being thankful and counting your blessings. If we shift the focus, then we come up with a different perspective. It’s the Copernican revolution again. The earth is not the center. The sun is the source and the sustainer of life. In terms of the Christian faith, the person is not the center, the SON is both the

source and the sustainer of life.

What does this mean – practically? It means that for the Christian the focus is...

1. Not the gift – but the **giver**.
2. Not the object – but the **source**.
3. Not the result – but the **purpose**.
4. Not what I have – but **whose I am**.

This applies to material things as well as things of the spirit.

I sit in our living room and look around – the pictures, the artwork, the music box – all are enhanced in both their beauty and their use by remembering the giver – and the occasion. The giver, not the gift.

We are often called by the hospital to come to the bedside of a sick person (oftentimes people we don't even know) to hold their hand, read Scripture and say a prayer. We are called, however, not because of what we have – but because we belong to God – not to any particular church... but to God. Not what we have, but whose we are.

What or who is the object of thankfulness? What is the source of our gratitude?

*O give thanks UNTO THE LORD. O come let us sing UNTO THE LORD.* Christians believe that thankfulness is not an end in itself. There must be an object. And we do not thank ourselves for all our blessings, but God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Upon further reflection, we ask about response. What is the response of a grateful person? How do we express gratitude? A quick reply might be – celebration, as in a holiday. But is that enough? Can you celebrate an attitude? An idea?

The Christian sees the response of thankfulness as worship. *Let us come BEFORE HIS PRESENCE. Let us WORSHIP AND BOW DOWN.* Then celebration comes alive. We can celebrate relationship! We can worship a creator!

We are helped in this perspective by our memory. Proper memories always motivate. Deuteronomy 8 tells us, "Take heed lest you forget the Lord your God... when you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and dwell in them..."

It was thus with Christ. Note how he used the Old Testament and the remembrances of his history. It is thus with myself as I sit in my living room. It is so as we celebrate this holiday – or it should be. With the right use of memory, life is seen through the eyes of God, and actions become an extension of His love.

Jesus summarized the experience of the healing of the lepers by saying, *Was not one found to return and GIVE PRAISE TO GOD?* That's the focus: not the gift, but the **GIVER**; not the object, but the **SOURCE**; not the result, but

the **PURPOSE**; not what I have done, but **WHOSE I AM**.

So I rejoice with you in the opportunity for a great holiday celebration. May your day be happy, your memory sharp, and your focus clear!

And when you become discouraged, *remember*. God has already spoken and acted in Jesus Christ. The evidences of His love are undeniable. Our job is to remember, believe, and go forward in thankfulness – as my Father would say, in "THANKS-LIVING."

The great hymn says, "Not alone for mighty empire... but for conquests of the spirit, we give thanks to you, O Lord."

THANKSGIVING DAY is November 22. It is a secular holiday in our country. But this year make it a sacred day as well. Practice gratitude to the LORD! Please don't see the day as ... a day off work, a day to sleep in, a day to watch football, a day to plan your shopping trip for the next day's sales, a day to stuff yourself full of food. Instead, get on your knees to praise God for His sovereign majesty. Thank the LORD for his abundant blessings to you and even for the adversities from which you can grow closer to him. Thank him for life, for home, for food, for a country where we may worship as we are called. Ask Him to show you how you need to change to grow closer to Him, then resolve to do it. And pray for all those places where people are not able to thank the Lord, and even for all those who do not acknowledge Him. The fact that some people do not acknowledge that God is the Creator, Jesus is the Savior and Redeemer and the Holy Spirit is the Sustainer does NOT make it not so! And thank the Lord for his greatest gift – the Lord Jesus Christ who died for the sins of the world – your sins and mine!

*In gratitude for all your blessings to us, O God, and in devotion to your son, Jesus Christ, we dedicate our lives to the service of others and the glory of your holy name.*

### READ YOUR BIBLE

*We're almost there. If you have been following these suggested readings throughout the year, then you know that at the end of December we will have read through the entire Bible. Keep going. The Lord has more blessing to pour out on us as we are faithful in this small area.*

The month of **November**

1. John 8-10, Psalm 111
2. John 11-13, Psalm 112
3. John 14-17, Psalm 113
4. John 18-21, Psalm 114
5. Acts 1-2, Psalm 115
6. Acts 3-6, Psalm 116
7. Acts 7-9, Psalm 117
8. Acts 10-12, Psalm 118
9. Acts 13-14, Psalm 119:1-8, Numbers 23:8-10
10. Acts 15-17, Psalm 119:9-16, Numbers 23:19-24
11. Acts 18-20, Psalm 119:17-24, Numbers 24:5-9
12. Acts 21-23, Psalm 119:25-32, Numbers 24:17-19
13. Acts 24-26, Psalm 119:33-40, Deuteronomy 33:26-29
14. Acts 27-28, Psalm 119:41-48, Luke 1:46-55
15. Romans 1-2, Psalm 119:49-56, Luke 1:68-75
16. Romans 3-5, Psalm 119:57-64, John 3:16
17. Romans 6-8, Psalm 119:65-72, Romans 11:33-36
18. Romans 9-11, Psalm 119:73-80, Romans 16:25-27

19. Romans 12-14, Psalm 119:81-88, 2 Corinthians 13:14
20. Romans 15-16, Psalm 119:89-96, Ephesians 2:1-10
21. 1 Corinthians 1-4, Psalm 119:97-104, Ephesians 3:20-21
22. 1 Corinthians 5-8, Psalm 119:105-112, Philippians 2:5-11
23. 1 Corinthians 9-11, Psalm 119:113-120, 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13
24. 1 Corinthians 12-14, Psalm 119: 121-128, 1 Timothy 1:17
25. 1 Corinthians 15-16, Psalm 119:129-136, Hebrews 13:20-21
26. 2 Corinthians 1-2, Psalm 119:137-144, Jude 24-25
27. 2 Corinthians 3-6, Psalm 119:145-152, Revelation 1:5-6
28. 2 Corinthians 7-10, Psalm 119:153-160, Revelation 4:11
29. 2 Corinthians 11-13, Psalm 119:161-168, Revelation 15:3-4
30. Galatians 1-3, Psalm 119:169-176, Revelation 19:6-8

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

**DON'T FORGET!!!!** We need your help to make this year's OCC a success! You and your family can take part in this exciting project simply by picking up an Operation Christmas Child brochure and preparing your SHOE BOX GIFTS. See Donald Wilson with your questions. **REMEMBER:**

- >postage is now \$9 per box
- >please make checks payable to Samaritans Purse
- >put your postage (check or cash) inside your boxes.

### LOOKING AHEAD

**THANKSGIVING DINNER** As we did last year, families and friends of Cornerstone are invited to share Thanksgiving Day dinner with others who may not have family near. We will gather at Cornerstone for a traditional Thanksgiving Day celebration. Set aside the date NOW – Thursday, November 22nd. Make your reservation NOW using the slip in your weekly worship folder.

**UPWARD BASKETBALL & CHEERLEADING** comes back to Cornerstone this fall/winter. Registration and evaluation will be held Monday & Tuesday, November 19 & 20, 6-8pm nightly, with practices beginning the week of January 14, 2019, and a game schedule from January 26 through March 16, 2019. Upward Sports is dedicated to introduce children, grades K-6, to Jesus Christ while teaching them the fundamentals of basketball & cheer. For more information, or to register your children/grandchildren, please see Peter Jensen. **Please sign up to help with evaluations that will be held on November 19 & 20. We still NEED COACHES & ASSISTANTS, REFEREES & SCOREKEEPERS, and many more! Will you help?**

**CAROLING AT HIBERNIA MANSION** - You are invited to join the Worship Team and other members of the Cornerstone family at Hibernia Mansion to carol to the folks visiting the Christmas celebration at the mansion. The date is Friday, November 30. The time is 6:30-9:30pm, approximately.

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** On Sunday, December 2, you are invited to come to Cornerstone's annual Christmas Program. This year we will again share in the JOY of the Christmas season through this service of word and song. You won't want to miss this highlight of the Advent/Christmas season. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – Sunday, December 2 at 4pm.

SO – please invite your friends, family and neighbors to join you for this special Christmas program. Following the program will be a time of refreshment and fellowship. Come one, come ALL! Watch for FREE tickets to be available for you to use in inviting your friends!

**SWAG NIGHT** - Ladies & Men -- are you looking forward to SWAG night? The date is Monday, December 3, 6:30pm. Come to the church to create your own holiday swag. Bring your greens, ribbons, decorations, etc., (there will also be some supplies available to share) and enjoy this evening of fellowship and creation. We had a GREAT time last year. Plan on coming this year. It's OK to bring a friend. Watch for the sign up sheet so we have an idea of how many to set up for.

**PUNK ROCK CHRISTMAS PARTY** - Wednesday, December 12, at 7pm. Come to the church for a **GREAT TIME** of worshipping and caroling. **EVERYONE SHOULD COME!!!!**

**SUPPER WITH THE SHEPHERDS** - Friday, December 14, at 6pm. Children in grades 1 through 5 are invited to come to the church to have supper with the Shepherds.

**A NIGHT UNDER THE STARS** - Friday, December 14, at 6pm. Children in grades 1 through 5 are invited to spend *A Night Under the Stars* (a lock-in at the church), culminating the next morning at Breakfast with the Wise Men. Registration is required.

**BREAKFAST WITH THE WISE MEN** - Saturday, December 15, at 9am. Children up through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to come to the church to enjoy breakfast with our special guests, **Balthazar, Gaspar and Melchior.**

**CHRISTMAS WITH THE CORD** - Saturday, December 22, at 7pm. Come to the church to enjoy an evening of special Christmas music with The CORD (Peter, Paul & Dontell). Stay for a time of fellowship afterwards, provided by the Diaconate.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

#### A FAMILY CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Monday, December 24, 2018 - 6 pm

Bring the whole family for the Children's Christmas Program designed for the whole family to welcome in the Lord's Birthday.

#### CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

Monday, December 24, 2018 - 11 pm

We will gather around the Lord's Table for a service of candles, carols and readings from scripture as we welcome in the day of our Lord's birth.

This very special service is also an opportunity for you to invite family and friends to join you! **THIS IS THE VERY BEST WAY TO BEGIN YOUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!**

**HAVE A BLESSED &  
JOYOUS THANKSGIVING!**