

If I Was Running for Political Office Today...



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If I was running for office in America today, I'd prefer to run as an independent, unaffiliated candidate. Of course, that's not an option in our political system so I would be forced to choose one that doesn't really reflect or represent who I am or what I specifically stand for, considering the two primary party's current platforms.

With that said, I would run on that party's platform that I could closest relate to, which would be a poor representation of my beliefs.

If I were running today, I would run on the following principles...

A representative, not a politician

I would run as a representative of the people as close to the truest intent of representation as I could do. My goal and my aim would be to be a voice for the people I was elected to represent (district, municipal, county, state, etc.). My primary objective *would not be* to bring my personal interests into the legislative and/or governmental arenas. My primary objective would be to *be a voice* for the people of my given arena.

I would have two basic qualifiers for my representation of the will of the people:

- Does it preserve personal liberty? (without causing harm)
- Does it violate the U.S. Constitution?

Whatever legislation or matter was on the governmental table at the time of my service, those would be my baseline criteria.

Does it violate someone's personal liberty? Let's define that: the ability to make choices for your own life without causing harm to another or violating another's ability to make choices for their own life.

Does it fall within the U.S. Constitution's guidelines or does it violate them in any fashion? I recognize there is a lot of gray area in some of these realms, and that's where the discussion needs to occur, both in the community and in the political arenas. (But basically anything that violates the Bill of Rights I could never endorse.)

How would I attempt to represent my constituents?

I would set up a transparent forum, probably multiple forums [phone, email, social media, etc.], where my constituents, the people who elected me, could voice their concerns on any matter. If there's pending legislation, even past legislation, or proposed future legislation, I want to hear from the people I'm representing. I want to be their voice. If they have concerns, if they're angry, worried, happy, whatever, I want to hear it. If they have suggestions, I want to hear it.

I will publicly post my position on said matter and if at least fifty percent of my constituents do not voice or in some way record their will in the matter in difference (or opposition), I will vote according to my publicly posted stance.

As an issue arises, I will represent the will of the people in

my area insomuch as they have communicated with me. I will represent the majority with my vote – even if I disagree with the majority – as long as it falls within the two guidelines mentioned prior. (It cannot violate the U.S. Constitution and cannot infringe personal liberty).

I would be, after all, hired to represent the will of the people in my area. That's what representing their voice means.

What about the minority?

This is where the public discussion and dialogue needs and in fact, must, take place. The minority voice must be heard (at least by me). I will meet with those with a minority voice to hear their concerns and try to form viable options or solutions to their concerns with other legislation or otherwise solution-oriented actions.

I will be as accessible as possible, will encourage town hall meetings or otherwise public gatherings for public discussion, and/or will have an online forum for discussion and (appropriate) debate. I will seek to find outlets, people and/or organizations to hear, address, and actively pursue solutions to relevant needs represented by people groups in my area, as much as humanly possible.

Often meeting the needs of the majority can create difficulties for the minority, or leave glaring voids in the needs of the minority. One man's solution can become another man's obstacle or even detriment. Representing Americans means representing as many as possible, not just the majority. I would strive to find or form viable solutions for as many as possible, insofar as the government is able. I would not rest with merely representing the majority.

I would even seek to find solutions outside the government as much as I could. Most of the times the private sector has handled problem solving far more efficiently than the

government.

Speaking of discussion...

The public arena has become less and less a venue for viable discussion on societal concerns. It used to be in America that people gathered in homes, in churches, in parks and other places to discuss matters concerning public life.

Today social media has taken the place of many of those public gatherings, for the most part. That would be acceptable if all voices could be heard. But such is not the case anymore. Because of growing censorship, there are now qualifiers for statements, punishments for contradictory statements, and a lack of basic good manners over all. People are quickly losing the ability to have a public discussion with multiple perspectives being discoured.

Regardless of methodology, the discussion must happen for societal growth. Bad ideas are exposed when they are fleshed out and challenged. Good ideas are birthed from exposure to multiple perspectives of an issue.

Possible conflicts...

I am a Christian. I happen to believe there's a better way for a lot of the issues that are out there today.

That said, if I were to be honest, I'd assess that America is a post-Christian nation. While there may seem to be a majority of Americans that profess to be Christians, they don't necessarily follow the tenets and principles of the faith as outlined in the Scriptures. Most don't seem knowledgeable about the principles of God, the character of God, or the will of God. Most seem ignorant of even the written Word of God. Calling oneself a Christian isn't a benchmark for reflecting Christian principles in one's life.

That's not a judgment; it's just an observation of our nation

today. I find America to be a post-Christian nation.

I realize that my Christian convictions and beliefs would be archaic to some, out of touch to others, restrictive to many, and any number of other criticisms you could think of. But I would not be running for office as a Christian; I'd be running as an American that believes in the voice of the people within the parameters of the U.S. Constitution and the principles of freedom, personal liberty.

If a matter of legislation was to be voted on that countered my Christian principles, I would vocally dissent to the matter with explanation. But if the majority of my constituents were in favor of the legislation I disputed, I would vote with my constituents, ***unless it violated the U.S. Constitution or one's personal liberty.***

I'm not God. As a Christian I am an ambassador for Christ. That means I represent the kingdom of God to the kingdom of the world. The kingdom of the world can reject God's kingdom, and choose ways contrary to God's kingdom. I, as a Christian, choose not to. But I'm not here to tell you what to choose, only to show you what I understand God's will in any given matter. The choice is still yours. That's part of the burden and privilege of freedom.

Let's talk about freedom for a minute.

Freedom is precious to Christians, and it should be precious to Americans. Until recently, we have had the right to criticize our rulers, to challenge what we interpret as injustice, and to congregate to affect change (to name a few). That is not possible without fear of repercussions (some quite severe) in most other nations of the world. (and is quickly becoming the same here)

Freedom is the basic tenet of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, and especially the Bill of Rights. Freedom is what sets America

apart from almost all the other countries of the world. Freedom is what drives millions of people from other nations to seek refuge and citizenship in America. Without freedom, we are just another European, South American, or Asian country.

The ability to make one's own decisions, to determine one's life course insomuch as it does no harm to another and does not impede another's abilities to make decisions for their own life, is freedom in its purest form. That's what America was founded upon. Remove the guarantee and foundation of freedom and you kill America.

There are a lot of laws in America that impede freedom right now. There are a lot of laws in America that promote immorality. As a Christian, I oppose both. I could glean from my understanding of God to help shape public policy insofar as my constituents would allow. But understand this: God allows us the freedom to choose our own welfare, to choose life and death, to choose straight or crooked, to choose health or sickness. And with every choice comes a consequence.

As a Christian we learn that it is for freedom's sake itself that Christ sets us free. (Galatians 5:1) We're admonished to stand firm in our freedoms or we can unwittingly be placed into bondage, serving something or someone against our will. This is most precious to every serious Christian, and is reflective in the principles of America as well. Freedom is the highest ideal. If it's the premise of our nation, I allow you the freedom to choose your path and convictions, just as you allow me mine. We don't have to agree or be the same, but the sake of freedom allows us to – up to the point we infringe on another's ability to be free (without causing harm).

Scripture tells us that as a Christian all things are permissible (because we are free) but not all things are beneficial (healthy). So we choose to limit some of our

freedoms and to exercise restraint against things that hinder health and growth. (1 Corinthians 6:12, 10:23) This reiterates there is a law of cause and effect, choice and consequence of choice.

For example, sexual sins carry the weight of sexually transmitted disease, unwanted pregnancy, physical illnesses, seared consciences that lead to depravity like pedophilia and child trafficking, etc. Those are just some of the consequences for choices that counter the principles of God.

Redefining humanity, human DNA, human biology, etc. apart from God's design comes with its own consequences, some of which we may not discover until the damage is done.

Failing to enforce the sanctity of life, whether it be the security to live in one's own home, on one's own land, or the preservation of the frail and weak, or differences in culture, or any number of other scenarios of honoring life comes with consequences of violence, death, destruction and societal disruptions.

Freedom is choice and choices have consequences – some instant, most not. The choice to murder the unborn carries consequences that pollute the land, but most are unwilling or unable to see such. Being in a post-Christian nation does not easily allow Christian truths to enter the public arena for much more than ridicule. But ignoring or disregarding such truths does not eliminate the consequences of them.

Americans may indeed choose to legislate immorally, and as a Christian I may understand there is a better way. I'm happy to share what I've learned and understand of God's higher ways, but the freedom to choose them is even more important than the value of the higher ways. It is the highest emulation of the love of God to allow freedom, for that is both what God has given us and who God is.

As an elected representative, one is supposed to represent the

will of the people within the parameters of the Constitution of the United States, and to preserve the liberty of Americans' personal lives. It would be my hope as a Christian these are not exclusive to the principles of Christianity, but if we're rightly governing America and America should choose to establish immoral laws, my freedom as an American Christian should enable me to follow my God morally even in the midst of an immoral society. That is, after all, what liberty in America is about.