

Facing a Federal Election

I have often been asked, "Why support a Christian political party? Aren't you coasting your vote?" My reply? "How can I vote for any of the five parties in Canada's parliament?"

Consider the liberal philosophy of all of these parties. It is unfortunate that Canada's ruling party is called "Liberal," which gives the impression that a discussion of liberalism is merely a discussion of the practices and policies of the Liberal Party. But the latter is only a manifestation of an ideology that goes far beyond politics. Modern liberalism is an ideology that encompasses much more than politics.

- It is the triumph of a materialistic and mechanistic worldview and its technological and manipulative approach to politics.
- It implies practical atheism.
- It rejects the supremacy of God, it believes in the supreme value of the individual, his freedom and his rights.
- It is a man-centered, rather than a Biblical-God-centered, view of human affairs, regarding human potential and achievement as the main ingredients of life.
- It recognizes no higher rule than the human will. It serves the individualistic ambitions of the sovereign self.
- It is totally dedicated to consumerism.
- It is under the illusion that it can create utopia here on earth. Man is the creator of his own meaning and the master of his own destiny. Through reason alone he can create utopia here on earth. Man is the center of his own meaning and the master of his own destiny. Through reason alone he can try to understand his world and decide what is true or false. As an autonomous rational human being he can order the structure of his society as he sees fit without any reference to God.

Liberal political decisions are, therefore, detached from any reference to the truth of the Gospel. Liberalism also has a bigoted aversion towards opponents, who express a political view from a religious perspective, that is nothing if not intolerant.

If we believe in the Lordship of Christ, we must declare it in public. If we are convinced that truth is not determined by the majority, and that it is not subject to fickle trends in public opinion, we have no choice but to think Christianly about the nature of the government and party politics.

I believe that a viable Christian political party with seats in parliament is within the realm of the possible. Furthermore, we should not be impressed by numbers and outward success. Our Lord demands faithfulness from His followers. And no one can fail at anything unless something is tried. God uses a small nation to bring about His redemptive purposes. One crucial recurring theme in Scripture is the concept of the remnant. Compared with the whole nation of Israel, the remnant of God's people is small (2 Kings 19:4). The apostle Paul spoke about a spiritual remnant saved by the Gospel from the midst of apostate Israel, which is evidence of God's grace (Rom. 11:5). If Christians rely on numbers and on their own strength and ingenuity in the political arena, they will surely fail. When Zerubbabel, along with the high priest Joshua, was called to restore the temple in ruined Jerusalem, the Lord told him, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit" (Zech. 4:6). And the experience of Christian politicians demonstrates that only reliance on the Lord and an unswerving commitment to Scripture can make a difference for the good in society and a nation.

Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876), Dutch historian and a Calvinist politician, did his utmost to promote his "anti-revolutionary" views and form a Christian party His times were not congenial for such an enterprise. Secularism was making inroads in church and society The Dutch Reformed church was polarized between the liberal and the orthodox. A small number of the latter had seceded from the church. The arts had begun to take the place of the church as a teacher of morals. Yet Groen stayed the course. He was not impressed by numbers. History had taught him that direction has always been give to a nation by a minority of citizens who know what they want. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), Calvinist theologian and politician, became attracted to the "anti-revolutionary" view of Groen, whom he met in 1869. He became the aging Groen's protégé and successfully ran as an Anti-Revolutionary" for parliament. After Groen's death he succeeded him as party leader Kuyper worked hard to turn orthodox Calvinists into a political force. He too stressed the Biblical concept of the remnant. He pointed out that the Bible never portrays Israel as a homogenous community. Formally, yes, but not in reality True believers in Israel were a small minority (cf. Ps. 14:1; 10:2-4). Kuyper didn't believe in success through numbers.

In Canada, Christians, who are faithful to God's Word, are in a minority position. But this should not prevent them from submitting themselves to the Lordship of Christ in the arena of politics. History shows that it can be done – in faith and reliance on the Lord.

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