

How An Evangelical Christian Can Support a Mormon for President

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I am a theology professor at a Bible College and a pastor. I am also a political conservative. I frequently write posts and articles promoting political conservatism. Recently, some of my students have politely inquired how I could publically criticize Mormon theology in the classroom and from behind the pulpit and yet privately promote the Presidential candidacy of Mitt Romney, who is a professing Mormon. Here is my basic response:

The last time I checked, Jesus is not on the 2012 presidential ballot. Therefore, I have to vote for which of the two existing candidates, I believe better reflects biblical values. Keep in mind that a president is not in power to promote theology. That is what pastors and theologians are for. Rather, a president is elected to politically and economically govern our country. Therefore, I pick a president not based on his personal theology but rather upon his philosophy of government. When you compare Romney's philosophy of government to Obama's philosophy of government, which philosophy better mirrors biblical values? This is a question that all Christians need to ask in this upcoming election. For me, the answer is a no-brainer. Romney's philosophy of government, while not perfect, is much closer to Scripture than Obama's.

Here are some issues that I look at to discern the biblical orientation of the governing philosophy of any politician. With each issue I have included some Bible verse references in order to demonstrate to the reader that these preferences are not uniquely mine but rather are derived from the pages of God's Word. These issues can be categorized under the following headings: **economic issues**, **social issues**, and **foreign affairs matters**.

Economic Issues

Because of biblical prohibitions against stealing and covetousness (Exod. 20:15, 17) as well as the scriptural promotion of economic self-sufficiency through labor (Gen. 3:17-19; 2 Thess. 3:10), I typically inquire whether the candidate will use the power of the state to take the income of the earner and redistribute it to the non-earner? Due to the fact that the Bible teaches differing God-given abilities among human beings (Matt. 25:15), will the candidate use the force of government to guarantee *equality of opportunity* for all and leave *equality of result* to individual initiative, drive, work ethic, and talent? Because God has given the role of charity to the church (Jas. 1:27; 5:14) rather than the state (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:1-7), will the candidate ignore this boundary by imposing upon the state ever increasing charitable obligations thereby marginalizing the church's God-ordained role in this critical area? Also, the Bible views the family as the essential building block towards a healthy society (Eph. 5:22-6:4). Since today's families are under tremendous stress, will the candidate increase this pressure through the added burden of further taxation? Will he advocate excessive government regulation, which has the

net effect of spiking consumer prices? Will he place employers under greater taxation and burdensome regulation leading to inevitable downsizing, layoffs, and the re-location of factories beyond America's borders? All of these repercussions increase financial stress upon the family unit. Moreover, because the Scripture advocates leaving one's wealth to one's descendants (Prov. 13:22; 1 Tim. 5:8), I am always curious about whether the candidate will hamper generational wealth transfer through onerous inheritance taxes, which force the deceased's relatives to visit the undertaker and the IRS agent on the same day. Also, does the candidate understand that the earth experiences cyclical heating and cooling (Gen. 8:22)? For example, global warming transpired during the time of the Vikings, long before the advent of SUVs and modern industry. Does he instead attribute such cycles exclusively to human activity? If the latter, he will likely favor increased government control over economic behavior, which can cripple an economy and yet simultaneously have a negligible impact upon either global warming or cooling. In addition, does the candidate through rejection of true worship of God instead embrace earth worship (Rom. 1:22-23), otherwise known as the Gaia Hypothesis? In other words, has common sense environmental stewardship given way to pantheism and environmental extremism? If so, he will likely impede domestic fossil fuel and oil production. Such domestic drilling has the benefit of reducing America's dependence upon foreign sources of oil that are often controlled by governments that do not have our nation's best interests at heart. Furthermore, because the Bible warns against the bondage associated with excessive debt (Prov. 22:7) and also categorizes unpaid debts as theft (Ps. 37:21), will the candidate continue to add to our runaway national deficits and debt? Increasing our national debt not only steals from future generations, but it also compromises America's economic well-being. In a similar vein, because respect for America's founding documents are the best insulation against runaway government spending and concentration of power into too few hands, will the candidate favor appointing individuals to the judicial branch of government who actually care about the original intent of our Constitution? If not, he may allow judges onto our courts who see our Constitution as merely a "living and breathing" amorphous document. Virtually anything can be read into such a meaningless document in order to socialize our country.

Social Issues

Since Scripture makes no distinction between the born and the unborn (Ps. 139:13; Jer. 1:5), does the candidate favor legal protection for the unborn? Also, because God has established heterosexual monogamy as the pattern for marriage (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-25; Rom. 1:26-27), will the candidate promote this divine standard as the societal norm, or will he instead reduce this time-honored standard to simply one among many lifestyle alternatives? Moreover, because God has given to the state the power to execute criminals in instances of murder (Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:4), will the candidate seek to abolish or promote capital punishment? In addition, because the Scripture routinely warns of the dangers of abusing alcohol (Lev. 10:9; Prov. 31:4-5; 1 Tim. 3:3), pornography (Matt. 5:27-28), and gambling (Prov. 13:11), will the candidate support the legal right of communities to restrict such deleterious influences and establishments from their neighborhoods, schools, children, homes, and churches? Furthermore, because God has entrusted the task of rearing and teaching children to parents as opposed to government bureaucrats (Deut. 6:6-7; Josh. 4:20-23; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4), does the educational philosophy

of the candidate empower the parents or the government teachers' unions? The former can be empowered through educational choice, vouchers for private or parochial schools, and opt out alternatives for public school courses and presentations deemed offensive and harmful by parents. Also, in view of the fact that the Scripture commands believers to preach the Gospel to every creature (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15), will the candidate use the force of government to restrict public expressions of Christianity in public places and schools as well as over the airwaves and on the internet? Interestingly, in Luke 22:36, as Christ was sending out His disciples into the hostile world from the Upper Room, He said, "and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one" (Luke 22:36). In so doing, Christ provided not only for the self defense of His disciples but also their right to defend themselves from aggression. Therefore, a good question for any candidate is whether he believes that individual and private citizens have a right to keep and bear arms? In other words, does he believe that the Second Amendment to the Constitution guarantees an individual right to bear arms or does he instead believe that the Second Amendment is some sort of nebulous collective right that has nothing to do with personal freedom to retain a firearm? Does the candidate instead support endless regulations and licensing requirements upon firearms thus paving the way toward their ultimate and total governmental confiscation? Because the Bible teaches that all people have equal dignity and worth (Gen. 1:26-27; Gal. 3:28), will the candidate enforce all of our laws equally and fairly among all people regardless of gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status (Deut 25:16; Prov. 20:23)? Discrimination against racial minorities should no more be tolerated than reverse discrimination against whites through quotas, timetables and set asides. White aggression against racial minorities should be punished to the full extent of the law and so should Black Panther voter intimidation against whites.

Foreign Affairs Matters

Because the concept of the individual nation state originated with God (Gen. 10:32; 11:1-9; Deut. 32:8; Acts 17:26), will the candidate favor submitting the political sovereignty of national governments to unaccountable trans-national political organizations all in the name of global governance? A related issue involves national borders. Since God has established national entities and their existing borders, will the candidate enforce our borders or will he leave America vulnerable to terrorist attacks through a porous border policy? In addition, God has promised to bless the world through national Israel (Gen. 12:3b; Isa. 42:6; 49:6). Consequently, He promises to bless those who bless Israel and conversely vows to curse those who curse her (Gen. 12:3a; Joel 3:2b). Therefore, another important question entails whether the candidate favors reducing Israel's existing borders in exchange for the illusory promise of peace. Such a process makes Israel more vulnerable to aggression and attack by her surrounding hostile neighbors. After all, it is Satan's ambition to eradicate the Jewish people and state (Rev. 12:1, 13-17; Gen. 37:9-10). Thus, a candidate's view on Israel largely tells me whether He is cooperating with God's agenda or the devil's. Moreover, due to the fact that many evil rulers and terrorists abroad will only be deterred from violent behavior through the counter threat of force (Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9), will the candidate pursue a foreign policy of peace through military strength? Without this perspective, the danger is that the candidate will naively and ineffectively seek to deter evil in the world through American military reduction and

unpreparedness. Such a policy of appeasement will in turn lead to endless dialogue, treaty and peace agreements not too dissimilar from the pattern espoused by Neville Chamberlain, apology tours, and financial subsidies given to America's sworn enemies, thus endangering our own national security.

For me, the whole issue in selecting a political leader relates to his philosophy of government as opposed to his personal theology. As the old adage goes, "I would rather be governed by a competent Turk than an incompetent Christian." Jimmy Carter serves as a perfect example. While professing faith in Christ, he had a non-biblical philosophy of government. Consequently, he has gone down in history as one of our worst presidents. Besides, if we are going to vote based on a candidate's personal theology rather than his philosophy of government, I hardly see how Obama is much of an improvement over Romney. Obama attended a church for over 20 years that taught the non-biblical doctrine of Liberation Theology. When all of the evidence is considered, Obama also seems quite sympathetic to the non-biblical Islamic religion. While I disagree with both men on personal theological issues, I will take Romney's philosophy of government over Obama's any day of the week. When it comes to governing philosophy, which is what really counts in a President, Romney is far closer to my understanding of scriptural truth than Obama.

