

Allegiance

How Would Jesus Vote? #1 • September 6, 2026

Opening

How would Jesus vote?

He wouldn't!

He is **sovereign!** He is the **King of Kings.** He is the **Lord of Lords.**

Jesus doesn't vote; He *declares!* Jesus doesn't follow the crowd; He *reigns* over it! Jesus doesn't make convenient political alliances; He is *pure and perfect!*

I wanted to say those things immediately, before anything else. Because this new sermon series **scares** me. You saw the bulletin cover. You see the slides now. You can probably guess why it's scary.

- 1) **This series is out of my comfort zone.** You guys know me. You know I am not prone to being super political. I teach and preach with a balance of Old and New Testament, topical and doctrinal subjects...not news outlets.
- 2) **This subject has a minefield of opinions.** Our nation is divided. The one thing we can agree on is that someone else is wrong! Regardless of how I present an issue in this series, I am bound to put myself at odds with someone else who thinks I am being too liberal or too conservative. And that leads to #3.
- 3) **I don't want to lose people's respect.** I am called to be a minister, a pastor – to shepherd the flock, to care for the church, to proclaim truth. And if I make people mad over politics, I lose the ability to be that person for them. I might lose the chance to be effective in how I minister to them. And that leads to #4.
- 4) **I don't want to lose people.** *I half-jokingly told one of my preacher friends this is my "Let's See Who Leaves the Church" series.* He laughed at the joke...but then he sent me some reference material from a sermon series of his own that was

called “*The Separation of Church and Hate*.” Why? Because he agrees! This stuff gets people mad. And mad people leave. I don’t want people to leave any more than I want to have someone rip off my ear or my thumb. The body of Christ should stay intact and heal if it is injured!

...but most importantly...this sermon scares me because of...

- 5) **Jesus.** I tremble at preaching this series. I do not want to claim anything for Jesus that He wouldn’t claim for Himself. That would be foolish and arrogant! If I package *my own opinion* on issues and proclaim those opinions from the pulpit, acting as if Steve Howell’s views *should be* the views of our Lord and Savior Himself??? I wouldn’t be surprised if I had a heart attack on stage, or if I was struck mute...or if He sent a special delivery of poinsettias to the stage that triggered a sneeze- and snot-fest!

I’d much rather go back and preach something easy. Habakkuk, or Psalms, or Matthew...or A.I., or Taming the Tongue, or Fear.

So, why am I preaching this? Why in this series are we talking about “**Biblical Foundations for America’s Issues**”?

There are a lot of reasons, but they really boil down to this: if our church doesn’t talk about these issues clearly, who will?!

Election Day is two months away. If TCC doesn’t strengthen our Biblical foundations, we send you to the polling places to navigate these issues on your own - following the pundits on television, being disciplined by podcasts, or following the chants of protesters.

The church can and should do better than that! We should equip you to put your faith into practice – in every arena. You need Biblical foundations in your **family**. You need Biblical foundations in your **workplace**. You need Biblical foundations in your **marriage**. You need Biblical foundations in your **school**.

And you need Biblical foundations in the **voting booth**.

As Christians, we must have a clear Scriptural filter for the issues that face our nation. We need the Bible before we fill out a ballot.

This series will not focus on **candidates**.

This series will not go **in-depth** on every issue.

This series will not (probably) make you **happy**.

But it will make you **look at Scripture**. And if you take that Scripture and keep it as your foundation as you go to vote, I will be pleased!

“How would Jesus vote?” really means *“how should YOU vote?”*... if you understand Biblical principles. It’s your job to listen to what Jesus says and apply that to the little bubbles you fill in with your pen!

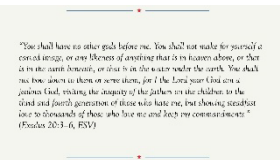
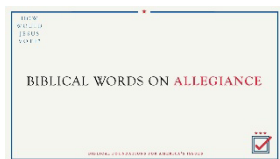
For the next few weeks in this series, we will listen to the words of Scripture on important topics. We will hear God’s words, we will consider modern American issues that connect to those words, and then we will challenge ourselves to support those Biblical positions with our votes.

Today we will be looking at issues of **allegiance**. Where does our loyalty lie?

Biblical Words on Allegiance

Before I say anything about allegiance, let me start by reading some passages. Open your Bibles and follow along:

- *“You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my*



commandments.” (Exodus 20:3–6, ESV)

“There was no accident, just both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords. But for us, There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.” (1 Corinthians 8:5–6, NLT)

- “There may be so-called gods both in heaven and on earth, and some people actually worship many gods and many lords. But for us, There is one God, the Father, by whom all things were created, and for whom we live. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.” (1 Corinthians 8:5–6, NLT)

“The LORD has made the heavens his throne; from there he rules over everything.” (Psalm 103:19, NLT)
“And, again above the nations, sitting on his holy throne.” (Psalm 47:8, NLT)
“All kings will bow before him, and all nations will serve him.” (Psalm 72:11, NLT)

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- “All kings will bow before him, and all nations will serve him.” (Psalm 72:11, NLT)

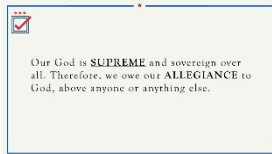
“Together they will go to war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them because he is Lord of all lords and King of all kings. And his called and chosen and faithful ones will be with him.” (Revelation 17:14, NLT)

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“I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any rule or authority or power or leader or anything else—only in this world but also in the world to come. God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.” (Ephesians 1:19–23, NLT)

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You heard it in these verses. Here is a Biblical foundation on which we can all stand:



**Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore...
we owe our allegiance to God, above anyone or anything
else.**

Amen?! (Amen!)



American Issues of Allegiance

Let's take that foundation and make it more specific. If it is true generally, it is true specifically. When it comes to American issues of allegiance, we must maintain that biblical foundation.



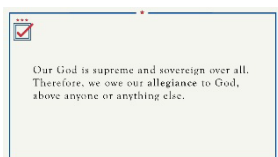
Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore, Our God is supreme and sovereign over...

- The United States of America (whether we agree or not)
- The Republican Party (whether we agree or not)
- The Democratic Party (whether we agree or not)
- Your President (whether we agree or not)
- Your Senators (whether we agree or not)
- Your Representatives (whether we agree or not)



We do not owe our total allegiance, then, to...

- Our Representatives (whether we support them or not)
- Our Senators (whether we support them or not)
- Our President (whether we support them or not)
- Our Political Party (whether we support them or not)
- Our Nation (whether we support it or not)



**Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore...
...we owe our allegiance to God, above anyone or anything else.**

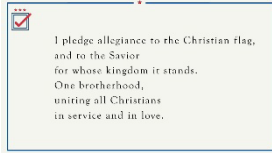
Growing up, we attended schools where it was the daily practice to have students and faculty recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Do you remember it? Stand and recite it with me.



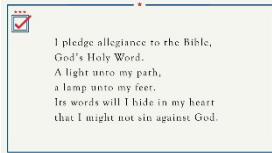
***I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America,
and to the republic for which it stands. One Nation, under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.***

Not to be outdone, students and faculty at Christian schools and institutions created additional pledges. Our kids from Genesis know

these versions well...as do those who attended Senior VBS a couple weeks ago. Stand and recite these pledges with me as well:



I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands. One brotherhood, uniting all Christians in service and in love.



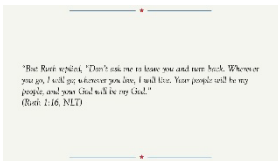
I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. A light unto my path, a lamp unto my feet. Its words will I hide in my heart that I might not sin against God.

[You may be seated]

"I pledge allegiance..."

Allegiance means that we will choose to **support**, **defend**, be **faithful to**, and **show loyalty to** a person, group, or cause.

Remember the story of Ruth? She is a perfect picture of allegiance. After Ruth's husband died, her mother-in-law tried to send Ruth back to rejoin her own people.



"But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God."
(Ruth 1:16, NLT)

That's what allegiance looks like! Ruth's words run parallel to our patriotism and our political affiliations. Like her, we say to a group or candidate or cause, *"Where you go, I will go."*



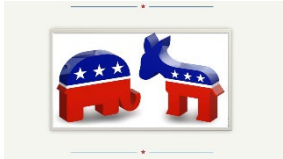
Here's where it gets sticky, though. Just a minute ago, you pledged allegiance to the U.S.A....to Christendom...and to Scripture. When those people, groups or causes are moving in the same direction, allegiance is simple and untested. However, when those groups or causes start to diverge, our allegiance faces a difficult choice:

Who will receive our *full* support, in word and action?
Which loyalty must we abandon?

For example, if your political party supports an **ungodly behavior**, must you support it as well? If your political party supports an **ungodly candidate**, must you support her as well? Do you abandon your Biblical convictions and trumpet another cause?

No! Your allegiance to God, above anyone or anything else, is what matters. You must align with Him, regardless of whether you are right wing or left wing (or in favor of the whole bird)! You must maintain allegiance with Him as you consider NATO, immigration, tariffs, the environment, welfare, abortion, human rights, infrastructure, drug wars, space exploration, healthcare, and taxes.

Here's what your allegiance to God means in practice.¹



- If you are a **follower of Jesus in the Republican Party**, you should use every bit of your energy and power to help the Republican Party change and reflect more and more the values of Jesus. You must push (via votes, via primaries, via candidates) for your Party's allegiance to our supreme and sovereign God...rather than supporting behaviors and values that are sinful and rebellious against Him.
- If you are a **follower of Jesus in the Democratic Party**, you should use every bit of your energy and power to help the Democratic Party change and reflect more and more the values of Jesus. You must push (via votes, via primaries, via candidates) for your Party's allegiance to our supreme and sovereign God...rather than supporting behaviors and values that are sinful and rebellious against Him.

What about the "separation of Church and State," you might ask?

There is no such thing.

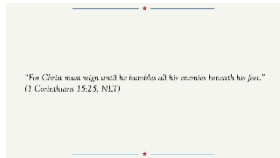
What I mean to say is that (*while the government may avoid establishing and running its own religious institution, per the first amendment*) every single person – every one! – will be voting to implement the values of their "god." They may select the god of money, the god of self-determination, the god of power, the god of pleasure, the god of current science...or the God of the Universe. Their votes will always elevate one god to the throne.

Muslims believe that their "god" should rule.

¹ Adapted from a quote in *Current Issues Bible Study Series: Politics* (Thomas Nelson, 2008. ISBN 978-1-4185-3426-4) p. 41

Atheists believe that their “gods” of science and reason should rule.

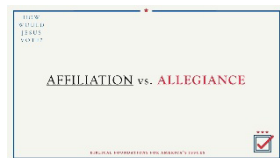
Christians believe that Jesus should (and will!) rule. We aren’t unique in elevating our God; we’re just right! If our allegiance is to Jesus, His values and priorities deserve to be over the nation!



“For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet.” (1 Corinthians 15:25, NLT)

Remember the Biblical foundation we established.

**Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore...
...we owe our allegiance to God, above anyone or anything else.**



Affiliation vs Allegiance

Christians, our allegiance is to God. But if you are part of American politics, you recognize that neither party is 100% in line with God’s Word. Allegiance to Him *requires* divergence from your party!

Does that mean you have to *break away* from your party?

Not quite. We can keep our *allegiance* with God while maintaining *affiliation* with others. We can be *with* even if we aren’t *for*.



Jesus once prayed to His Father on behalf of His followers,

“I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one.” (John 17:15, NLT)

We must still affiliate and engage with the world (or a political party), even while remaining wisely uncorrupted by it. We can stay in the band, even if some of them are playing the wrong notes.

Think of it this way.



Imagine you were buying me a gift at the store. The store has two only two options that you *must* choose before you head to my birthday party.

Gift Box #1 – Has items I love! It has a **Colorado Avalanche** jersey, **popcorn**, and a **new razor** to keep me looking good! But mixed in among them are items I

hate - a box of chocolates and a turtleneck sweater?!?!
Gross!

Gift Box #2 – Also has items I love! It has some valuable **rare packs** from my favorite trading card game, a gift card to **Texas Roadhouse**, **legal pads** AND **G2 pens**! But mixed in are items I hate – a Red Wings jersey, and the complete catalog of Hall & Oates on vinyl?!?! Ugh!

Each gift box is in line with part of my character and interests; each gift box contains items I vastly oppose. So, which one do you buy? The box with the items you think I will like the most? Or the box with the items you think I'll hate the least?

Either way, you are choosing – affiliating – with things that don't align with me!



The same thing happens at the ballot box. We owe our **allegiance** to God, above anyone or anything else. BUT... the allegiance we offer God in politics will always come with baggage. If we participate in the democratic process, we can't help but **affiliate** with those who don't share our allegiance.

- **Candidate #1** might please God with his stance on justice and life but anger Him with the way he treats the poor.
- **Candidate #2** might please God with his stance on healthcare and wealth yet disappoint Him on matters of war.
- (And sadly, there is no **Candidate #3** that pleases God on every issue!)

So, what do you do? Not every issue carries equal moral weight. Nevertheless, you will end up voting for a person who enacts God-pleasing policies on one issue while incurring His wrath on others. You have **affiliated** with an imperfect group, even while you retained your **allegiance** to God.

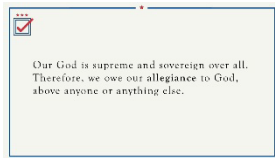
There does come a time when affiliation overwhelms your allegiance. Your affiliation shouldn't be taken lightly!

You can't pick a box full of Brussels sprouts (yuck) just because it has one Pull 'n' Peel Twizzler (yum) in the corner!

Should you vote for a party that consistently opposes God in every way except for a slogan? Should you endorse a candidate that regularly gives lip service to their Christian base but enacts policies that go the opposite direction? Should you support a politician whose words are constantly offensive even if they secure victories on an issue that matters to God?

*(Before you read anything into those characterizations – guessing what I might be inferring in terms of policies, platforms, or politicians – know that my choices were intentionally vague. If they bring a person to mind, that's on **you** to identify them and have the wisdom to discern whether your affiliation is in line with your allegiance).*

Making the choice is difficult. And not everyone will see it the same way you do. But at the end of the day, you should be making that decision and weighing the options from a position of **allegiance** to God. You should be making the decisions because you think it is the best way to please your God, not the best way to please yourself.



Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore... we owe our allegiance to God, above our affiliation with anyone or anything else.

Closing

A Biblical foundation for America's issues requires allegiance to Jesus.

That is true today, just as it was all the way back in the first century. When Jesus first started gathering followers, he did so in a way that ignored (or maybe intentionally flaunted?!) political boundaries.

“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. “Follow me and be my disciple,” Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.” (Matthew 9:9, NLT)

Jesus chose a tax collector – a Roman collaborator, the ultimate insider and defender of the status quo.

“Jesus called his twelve disciples together... first, Simon (also called Peter), then Andrew (Peter's brother), James (son of



*Zebedee), John (James's brother), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, **Simon (the zealot)**, Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him).” (Matthew 10:1–4, NLT)*

Jesus chose a Zealot – a Roman protestor and freedom fighter, the ultimate anti-establishment guy.

As different as far left and far right. Both affiliated with different parties and politics. But both in total allegiance to Jesus as Lord. They set aside their preferences and elevated the King of Kings.

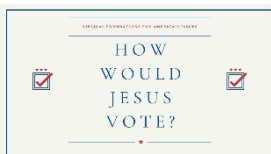
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anyone or anything else.**



When you offer your allegiance to God, your approach might look different than mine. The Bible shows people who had different relationships and affiliations with government.

- Some **worked in** the government (Nehemiah, Joseph, Daniel)
- Some **appealed to** the government (Esther, Moses)
- Some **ignored** the government (Peter, Shack/Rack/Benny)
- Some **fled** the government (David, the Israelites in the Exodus)
- Some **utilized** the government (Paul)
- Some **opposed** the government (Jonah, Elijah)
- Some **became** the government (David, Solomon)

You and I live in a democracy where we have choices in how much we engage the government. We have the rights and the opportunities to be involved as much or as little as we want to be. We have decisions about who to support if and when we stand at the ballot box.



“How would Jesus vote?” The Biblical foundation says He would vote in the way that best showed His **allegiance** to the Father.

Make the same choice.

Prayer

Invitation

**Our God is supreme and sovereign over all. Therefore...
we owe our allegiance to God, above our affiliation with anyone or
anything else.**

So, let us declare our allegiance as we sing to our King!

Sermon Notes

Biblical Words on Allegiance

(Exodus 20:3–6; 1 Corinthians 8:5–6; Psalm 103:19; Psalm 47:8; Psalm 72:11; Revelation 17:14; Ephesians 1:19–23)

Our God is supreme and sovereign over all.

Therefore, we owe our allegiance to God, above anyone or anything else.

American Issues of Allegiance

(Ruth 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:25)

Affiliation vs Allegiance

(John 17:15; Matthew 9:9; Matthew 10:1–4)

Sermon Discussion Questions

- Describe your personal involvement in politics. Have you ever run for office? Do you usually vote? Or do you tend to avoid politics? Explain.
- What voices have shaped your political positions? What role has the church played in shaping what you believe?
- Why is a Biblical foundation important for every area of our life? Read Psalm 1.
- How do you define allegiance?
- Read the following verses: *Exodus 20:3–6*; *1 Corinthians 8:5–6*; *Psalm 103:19*; *Psalm 47:8*; *Psalm 72:11*; *Revelation 17:14*; *Ephesians 1:19–23*. How would you summarize their teaching?
- Why do we owe our allegiance to God above anyone or anything else?
- In what ways could your allegiance to God push you to change the political party you typically support? What would change look like?
- At what point does your allegiance to God require you to affiliate (politically) with other candidates or parties? Why would that be difficult?