

CHAPTER SIX: BIBLICAL?

The following is by Rick Warren, the author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, and is taken from his webpage. He has 60,000 subscribers and provided “Ministry Toolboxes” to “136,000 pastors”²⁸ before the 2004 U.S. elections. He writes:²⁹

As church leaders, we know our congregations are not allowed to endorse specific candidates, and it’s important for us to recognize that there can be multiple opinions among Bible-believing Christians when it comes to debatable issues such as the economy, social programs, Social Security, and the War in Iraq.

But for those of us who accept the Bible as God’s Word and know that God has a unique sovereign purpose for every life, I believe there are five issues that are non-negotiable. To me, they’re not even debatable, because God’s Word is clear on these issues. In order to live a purpose-driven life—to affirm what God has clearly stated about his purpose for every person he creates—we must take a stand by finding out what the candidates believe about these five issues, and then vote accordingly.

Here are five questions to ask when considering who to vote for in this election:

1. What does each candidate believe about abortion and protecting the lives of unborn children?
2. What does each candidate believe about using unborn babies for stem-cell harvesting?
3. What does each candidate believe about homosexual “marriage”?

²⁸ Warren’s statement on PBS.

²⁹ From “Why every U.S. Christian Must Vote in this Election” by Rick Warren on www.purposedrivenlife.com.

4. What does each candidate believe about human cloning?
5. What does each candidate believe about euthanasia—the killing of elderly and invalids?

If these are the key questions for “Bible-believing Christians,” are they truly Biblical? No! But are they okay to believe? Yes, quite assuredly! Is “God’s Word” clear on these issues? Not at all! In fact, none of these is even mentioned in the Bible. None was a contemporary issue to the hundreds of authors whose writings contributed to the eventual compilation that Jews and Christians call “The Bible.” They simply reflect a belief system, and that’s certainly an acceptable thing to do.

As one might expect from writing that reflects a belief system, you may recognize bias in these questions (just as I’m sure you’ve already noted the bias in my writing!), especially in the definition of euthanasia. Webster defines it as “... method of causing death painlessly, so as to end suffering.” A contrasting set of truly Biblical questions might look like this:

1. What does each candidate believe about love? Love is mentioned 500 times in the Bible.
2. What does each candidate believe about the poor and what action will he take? There are 225 Biblical references to the poor. (The number of poor people has now risen 17% under Mr. Bush)³⁰.

These next two are offered, “tongue in cheek.” Of course, I would not vote for a candidate who approved of these – but *they are Biblical* reflecting, as scriptures do, the cultural views of that patriarchal time. Ethical decisions can be influenced by ancient writings but not limited by them.

³⁰ Kristof, Nicholas September 6, 2005 New York Times.