



# Questions to ask yourself before casting your vote

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The election is Tuesday.

Not that the election will be decided on Tuesday, but Tuesday is officially “election day.”

Far be it from me to tell anyone who they should vote for. Obviously, everyone needs to follow their conscience. Especially those who still have one.

I would, however, like to offer some guidance and support for the three people out there who are still undecided.

So when you walk into the precinct to cast your vote (if you have not already done so), here are some questions to ask yourself.

First, does character matter? One party is running around telling voters that how someone conducts their life should have no bearing on their ability to lead. Lie, cheat, steal. Those things are irrelevant they say.

And in a similar vein, how about this question: Is anyone above the law in the United States? Seriously, should a convicted felon be eligible to hold any elected office, much less the highest one on the land?

I’m pretty sure if I did a fraction of the things one of the presidential candidates did, I’d be staring at the four walls of my cell waiting for rec time in the yard.

How about civility? Does civility matter to you? Or are you fine with a candidate who routinely resorts to name-calling and cursing at their opponent like a bully on a kindergarten playground?

Another one you might want to ask: Do you want to live in a world where privacy is no longer considered a fundamental right?

Think about it for a moment. Do you really want the government in your bedroom and/or your doctor’s office? One party wants the government to stay out of your personal life. One party apparently wants the government right in the middle of it.

How about this one: Is it OK to demonize other people because of their race and ethnicity, religious beliefs, where they are from, or who they love?

I was raised a Christian. As such, I believe we are made in God’s image. And God, or so I was told, is no respecter of persons. Which candidate seems to understand that?

And while we’re on the subject, ask yourself this: Are you willing to compromise your religious values to support a candidate who openly mocks those values?

Put another way, would you vote for Satan if you thought he was on your side on one issue?

On a more mundane topic, but one that affects us all daily: Should whoever we vote for have a basic understanding of economics?

One candidate seems to think that tariffs will be paid by other countries, whereas everyone who's had even an entry-level economics course understands that tariffs will only raise the cost of goods and services for Americans who are already stretched to the limit.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, do we want to live in a fascist country?

And before you roll your eyes and dismiss this as an absurd question, think about it for a moment. According to Cybele Mayes-Osterman, a news reporter for USA Today, fascism is "an extreme combination of nationalism and militarism, often accompanied by a cult of personality surrounding a leader."

Sound familiar? I can tell you where my grandfather would have stood on this one. He marched across Europe to make sure we didn't live under a fascist regime. The freedom to dissent and criticize those in power was deeply embedded in his value system.

Then again, if you don't think this is a big deal, you're not alone. The Germans in the 1930s didn't seem to care about it either.

Again, I'm not telling you who to vote for, that's completely up to you. But you do need to give serious consideration to these questions before casting your ballot. Actions have consequences. And it'll be too late when the final tallies are announced.

Finally, whatever your answers, make sure your voice is heard on Tuesday. We still live in a democracy.

Keeping it requires eternal vigilance.



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