

Ps 146:3: “Put not your trust in princes.”
Reflections from *Jason Seville, Assistant Pastor, DRBC*

Conceived of properly, I think we’re right to be *hopeful* about elected officials while not *putting our hope in* them. But how do we know if we’re drifting toward the latter instead of the former? What are some diagnostic questions to ask others/yourself to assess whether we’re in a place of health or a place of danger?

1. Do you expect your “prince” to satisfy something for you that you believe Jesus fails to satisfy?
2. Do you get more worked up when someone speaks ill of your candidate OR when someone speaks ill of Christ? Do you get more excited about the prospect of converting a vote for a candidate or converting a soul for Christ?
3. Do you feel more fundamentally aligned with a church member who votes differently than you do OR a non-Christian who aligns with your political party?
4. When you think about the outcome of the upcoming election—some happiness or sorrow would be appropriate depending on how things turn out—but can you experience the election without being *overly* elated/euphoric if your candidate wins and without being *totally* devastated and destroyed if they lose?
5. How do you feel about the people who are supporting the “opponent?” Are you tempted to view them as enemies, or stupid, or evil? Or do you view them as image bearers of God (if non-believers) or as brothers and sisters in Christ (if believers), who may have good intentions (even if misguided) about why they’re supporting who they’re supporting? And then how do you treat/not treat or speak to/not speak to those supporters of an “opponent” in light of that?
6. Are you so excited about your "prince" that you fail to see their shortcomings, failures, and ways they aren't obeying the Lord? Are you only able to see this person's strengths and no weaknesses? Can you respectfully disagree with some of what they do or think?
7. Are you so discouraged if your "prince" isn't elected, that you fail to see how he/she could be used for the good of others?
8. Do you fail to pray for the "prince"...regardless of whether or not you voted for them?
9. When thinking of Biden or Trump as president, does your heart grow unsettled, anxious, angry, bitter, or frustrated to an extent that it is hard for you to focus spiritually, relationally, or occupationally?
10. Do thoughts of God being good and in control in this election cycle find its way in to your feelings and actions?

11. When anxiety from the election rises, are you running to God in His Word and in prayer?
12. Are you seeing an increase in consumption of media (or an increase of consuming news from one political side) that is fueling an anxious heart?
13. Does anyone know your heart processes and struggles in this area? Are you bringing them to light?
14. As a Christian, do you primarily see your citizenship in America or in heaven with Christ? Are you so consumed with the Prince of Peace that your heart is immovable regardless of who is elected? While we do have a stewardship responsibility to vote for candidates who promote righteousness and who will pursue justice, God is our hope. He ordains who is in office and who isn't (as much as we would like to think it's our votes). So pray, cast a vote, and trust that the outcome is ordained of the Lord. Our hope is not in the government.
15. Do you elevate your expectation of a candidate to a level that is not realistic?
16. Are you idolizing your vote/the voting process? Have you forgotten that it's not you who appoints leaders? Are you merely using your vote for a "good" candidate to produce the change you want to see or are you willing to put in the work yourself and tell the truth in your home/ neighborhood/ work/ social media?
17. Can your candidate win and you still feel compassion and love for the church member who wanted the election to turn out differently? Can your candidate lose and you still feel that world will not completely unravel?
18. Will you suffer through a sitcom that consistently blasphemes God but change the channel in disgust if a news anchor disparages your presidential candidate?
19. Do you think Christianity will die off if ___ is in the Oval Office in 2021?
20. If you were arrested for being a zealot for your political party, would there be enough evidence on your social media feeds or private conversations to convict you? Now, ask the same question about your passion for Jesus.