

Religious or spiritual people shouldn't be afraid to be involved in politics

Sam Harley
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It is a popular idea that religious or spiritual people shouldn't be afraid to be involved in politics, or should be advising and guiding politicians. It's a good idea for everyone to follow good principles, mind and body should come together, but there are pitfalls.

In the past, presidents had spiritual counsellors. This was a private choice, it could be someone famous, like Billy Graham, or someone personally known to the president.

As a minister, or just as someone who is spiritually guided, it is our job to every and any person we come across. The principles of heavenly family behavior apply to anyone, in any situation.

The pitfall is where we lean towards one side as being more godly, or even choose one as "God's side". Now, in one sense, if we keep counselling both sides, this can still work. But guiding politicians and being politically involved are not the same, and here's what happens.

We recommend, we advocate for one side because they are following spiritual principles more closely. We urge people to vote for and support that side. So far, so good, as long as we're doing so for clearly stated moral principles and encouraging both sides to act well. BUT, if we throw our support on one side and decide that they must win, no matter what, then quickly and easily we see only good on one side. We stop examining ourselves for faults and whether we're following our own principles; our side must win. We overlook every fault on our side. When we look at the other side, we see only evil. We see enemies. We see people who must lose. We stop cleaning our side of the street, and start micro inspecting the mess on the other side.

If we do this, we have not brought spirituality into politics; we have made politics our religion. If our definition of good and evil purely depends on which political party someone belongs to, then politics is now our religion.

Next we abandon our religious practices - such as forgiving, loving our enemies, seeing goodness in all people - because the enemy must be destroyed. We go from "Do unto to others what we would like done

to us", to "Do it to them before they do it to you."

As religious people, and indeed as people trained by True Parents, we need to see the good in everyone, especially in those who are more distant from the life we lead. We should be able to go into any office, any camp and love and guide whoever we find.

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