

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, October 8, 2016

As a Christian businessman, I take issue with the idea that we should strive for the greater good in our business dealings. Personally, I advocate striving for the best in all I do. For years I've used the phrase "Here to serve" to end my correspondence. You see, if we strive for the greater good we're basically making a judgment call on what that greater good looks like. Yes, it may be better than some business choices, but it may not be the best. On the first day of every new year, I find myself reading the words of Oswald Chambers from the devotional compiled by his wife not long after his death in 1917. *MY UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST* helps keep me grounded in my walk with God. And on January 1st I'm reminded that it's not about me but Him and my purpose is simply to place God and others before myself. Another great reminder I've kept in the back of my mind over the years are the principles presented by Jim Collins in his best-selling book *GOOD TO GREAT*. His sequel to his first best-seller *BUILT TO LAST* studies the difference prevalent in large companies that have weathered the economic storms that all companies must face. I also find myself often referencing the book of Proverbs which contains valuable advice on how to run a business and to succeed in life. Now, let's take a crack at politics.

I'm one of those Christians who will gladly discuss my faith with anyone who is willing to listen. I'm also glad to discuss my position on political matters that affect my faith and my patriotic foundational beliefs about this great country. We need to remember this country was formed on basic Judeo-Christian principles. When it comes to the presidential candidates, we may well be faced with a "lesser of two evils" rather than a "greater good" decision. Enough said. On a local level, our 24th Congressional race pits a good man who's been caught up in the political machinery of his party for years running against a young man who has a genuine desire to serve as a statesman for his local community. *Justin Fared* plans to bring fresh ideas and energy to Washington and fix the corruption that runs rampant in Congress. I know both men in this race and it's obvious to me that only one is prepared to take our local issues to Washington DC. That man has no strong party ties that will prevent him from properly representing our community. Personally, I believe Justin will strive to do his "Utmost for His Highest" and "His people" in our district. He's earned my vote and support!

In life it's quite easy to rationalize our actions and our beliefs. We all have an ideology that's been formed by our parents, our teachers, our personal research and those we hang out with in life. Much of the world is unfortunately caught up in a position of relativism, which keeps them from taking a solid stand on the most important issues we all face in life. We've been informed that there is no real "truth" and we can come to our own conclusion as to what is right in our own eyes. This is nothing new and it is certainly shown as a reoccurring theme in the Bible. In Judges 2:11-12 we are told, "After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither of the Lord nor what He had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals." (NIV) We are no better today than the nation of Israel during the time of the judges three thousand years ago!

We can make a difference if we simply come to realize that we don't need to conform to the present pattern of this world. We need to take a stand for what we know is right and engage in the political process. This is the greatest nation in the history of mankind, but we need to get back to our roots of serving God and doing what is right in His eyes. Please join me in the process of making America great once again.

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: Judges 2:11-12; Judges 4:1-2; Judges 6:1; Psalms 36:1-4; Colossians 4:5-6

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Passages to Ponder: Judges 2:11-12; Judges 4:1-2; Judges 6:1; Psalms 36:1-4; Colossians 4:5-6

Judges 2:11-12 New International Version (NIV)

¹¹Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. ¹²They forsook the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They aroused the LORD's anger

Judges 4:1-2 New International Version (NIV)

4 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, now that Ehud was dead. ²So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim.

Judges 6:1 New International Version (NIV)

6 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites.

Psalms 36:1-4 New International Version (NIV)

For the director of music. Of David the servant of the LORD.

¹I have a message from God in my heart
concerning the sinfulness of the wicked:

There is no fear of God
before their eyes.

²In their own eyes they flatter themselves
too much to detect or hate their sin.

³The words of their mouths are wicked and deceitful;
they fail to act wisely or do good.

⁴Even on their beds they plot evil;
they commit themselves to a sinful course
and do not reject what is wrong.

Colossians 4:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.