

About This Election

by Al Diestelkamp

Franklin D. Roosevelt was president of the United States when I was born; but his successor, Harry S. Truman, was the first president that I was old enough to remember. This means that in my lifetime there have been thirteen different men who have held that office; and, if I live through January of next year, it appears that I will live under a fourteenth president.

Prior to 1971, a person had to be 21 years old in order to vote; so 1964 was the first presidential election in which I was permitted to participate. Admittedly, this election cycle is proving to be different (and more divisive) than any in my lifetime; but a study of history will show that by God's grace our nation has actually survived even worse campaigns and some despicable and corrupt presidents.

The extreme distrust of and dislike toward the only two candidates who have a chance of winning the election have divided our nation, but we must make sure that this election does not divide our brethren. Public discussions (especially on social media) show that brethren are certainly not in agreement about participation or non-participation in this year's election.

The aforementioned dislike and distrust of the candidates is even more noticeable among brethren and has elicited spirited debate about what should be our response. Opinions range from voting for the "lesser of two evils" to opting out of the election process altogether.

It is not my place or intent to tell you which candidate to vote for or whether to vote at all. Instead, I would like to remind you that it is not the outcome of this election which will determine the demise or exaltation of our nation. What will exalt our nation is righteousness (Prov. 14:34).

Many of us must face the fact that no matter which candidate is elected, unless God intervenes, we may have to give honor to one whom we consider to be "despicable," or "corrupt" — or both (Rom. 13:1-7). God is ultimately in control. As spoken by the prophet, "*Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding*" (Dan. 2:20-21). He has the power to do with presidents what He did with kings.

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