

# Texas Baptist Forum

March 2, 2012

## **Apathy, fear & pulpits**

Regarding assertions that preachy candidates turn off voters and "apathists" are ho-hum about religion ([Feb. 6](#)): Apathy toward politics has created our nation's desperate conditions. Thirty million Christians did not vote in 2008, and yet our nation's future is in our hands.

At one time, the pulpit was our main source of media. The "black-robed regiment" preached—not politics, but issues that congregants needed to know, pray about and then act upon.

The spirit of fear rests on pulpits today. We seem more concerned about offending the few than challenging congregants to action.

The First Amendment states Americans have a protected freedom of speech. However, in 1954, Sen. Lyndon Johnson amended a bill that crippled nonprofit organizations' freedom of speech. That amendment progressively created the untrue belief that mention of anything remotely political from the pulpit violates the separation of church and state mandate.

Fear of this untruth has crept into the church and frozen the pulpit. Truthfully, though churches cannot endorse candidates, they are free to educate their congregations through distributing voter guides, registering voters or hosting candidate forums.

Apathy reigns in the church and from the pulpits. This apathy is a precursor to being silenced on any issue pertaining to our religious freedom.

Charles Finney said, "Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to the country as a part of their duty to God."

Ann Quest

Dallas

### **Sympathy for Catholics**

A Catholic bishop has stated some ObamaCare [requirements](#) are the same as "declaring war on the Catholic Church." This is not just a Catholic issue, but one that all people of faith should study and engage. All of us could lose our freedom of conscience and other freedoms if we sit this out.

I am praying Baptists and evangelicals of all stripes will support our brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church in their day of need. My husband and I are Texas Baptists, and we work closely with Catholics and appreciate them.

Jean Whitmore

Biloxi, Miss.

### **Violent texts**

I appreciated "Christians should deal seriously with the violent biblical texts, historian asserts" ([Feb. 23](#)). One of the best and shortest articles I've ever read on this subject is found in the 2002 printing of the NIV Study Bible (page 287) titled "The Conquest and the Ethical Question of War."

J.A. Reynolds

Belton

*What do you think? Send letters to Editor Marv Knox by mail: P.O. Box*

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