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Why All the Fuss? *Do Voter Registration and Voting Really Make a Difference?* *Wisconsin Family Council's Voter Registration Kit*

When people are registered to vote before Election Day, they are far more likely to actually go to the polls and cast a ballot on Election Day. And those ballots really do make a difference!

Consider these statistics:

- Although 22 million more people voted in 2004 than 2000—including a great number of evangelicals and other people of faith—**approximately 25 million evangelicals did not vote.**¹
- About one-half of U.S. church-goers aren't registered to vote.² In 2000, 60% of Wisconsinites, or just over 3 million citizens, were full members of a church congregation (including their children), or regularly attended church services or participated in the congregation.³ Since you can't vote if you're not registered, that means that only about 1.5 million regular church-goers in Wisconsin can vote. **Think of the impact Christians could have if we had even 80% of all church-goers registered and just two-thirds of those actually voted!**
- In a post-2006 election survey, nationwide 22% of those who said they voted in the election reported that **election information was made available at their church.**⁴
- In the 2006 Wisconsin Fall General Election, Kim Hixson won the 43rd Wisconsin State Assembly District **by 10 votes. Every single vote counts**, especially in local elections. The locally elected officials in your community make the decisions about zoning laws (e.g., where churches can locate, where sexually-oriented businesses can locate, etc.), school policies (even if your children do not attend public schools, your taxes are paying for them), policies that affect where you can share the gospel, etc. At the state level, your state senators and representatives make the law for Wisconsin, law that directly impacts your life and your church.

Ponder these ideas:

- Churches should **encourage civic involvement**. The church is the moral gatekeeper of a society. Individual Christians and the church have a **biblical injunction to be salt and light in our communities, culture and government**. When we don't vote, we neglect our civic and Christian duties.
- The hot topics in politics today, including abortion, pornography and homosexual "marriage," are fundamentally moral issues that have been politicized in order to remove them from the influence of moral forces, in particular Christianity. Every issue can be considered "political." **Nothing pleases Satan more than Christians keeping silent about moral issues that have profound societal implications.**
- Our first and foremost purpose as Christians is to glorify the Father, but our **freedom to worship God, proclaim the entire Word of God, and witness to unbelievers is threatened every day**. When Christians don't vote, we lose much of our influence over how our society and nation are governed.
- Unless we take a stand as Christians and citizens, our ability to publicly proclaim Christ could disappear entirely in the United States. **Casting responsible ballots in line with our Christian beliefs is part of taking that stand.**

¹ 2006 Citizenship Message Brief, "Voter Your Values Kit," © 2006 Focus on the Family.

² *How To: Host a Church Voter Registration Drive*, Citizen Magazine, April 2004.

³ <http://www.thearda.com/>, accessed 02/06/08.

⁴ <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/99/religious-groups-react-to-the-2006-election>, accessed 02/06/08.