

# The Primacy of Worship and Who/What the Political Parties Worship

## **HOST: David Wheaton:**

The primacy of worship and who and what the political parties worship. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on the Christian Worldview Radio Program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported radio ministry. Thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support, and lifting us up in prayer. You can connect with us by visiting our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout the program today.

There is no more important issue in pursuit than worshiping God. It's more important than who will be our next president, more important than world peace, more important than your health, financial security, and whatever else we treasure. Scripture makes the primacy of worship clear. King David prayed, "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth. Yours is the dominion, O Lord, and You exalt Yourself as head over all." That's from 1 Chronicles 29:11.

Paul wrote, "Whether, then, you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31. King Solomon exhorted, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God," reverence, have awe for Him, "and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person." That's Ecclesiastes 12:13. Psalms, the songbook of scripture closes this way, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6.

God created man as a worshipful being. We can see this because everyone worships someone or something. If God isn't worshiped, a false God will be substituted. A person, pleasure, possessions, position, popularity, power to name just a few. God as creator, sustainer, savior, and sovereign over all, He deserves our worship. Our peace, purpose, and pleasure in life is directly proportional to how rightly and authentically we worship the Creator.

Our guest this weekend is Scott Aniol, Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries. G3, which stands for "Gospel, Grace, and Glory", is a Christian organization that aims to strengthen the local church through conferences, resources, online articles, podcasts, biblical worship workshops, and local church-based curriculum for Sunday school and small groups. Scott Aniol joins us today to discuss "The Primacy of Worship." He explains in a recent five-part column series corresponding to each of the "five solas" of the Reformation that worship is even more important than salvation, for salvation is the entry point to proper worship of God.

This program aims to be helpful for individual Christians and also the church, for worship includes but is far more encompassing than music alone. And since it's election season with the Democratic National Convention having just concluded in Chicago, we will discuss what is being worshiped by both parties and how to think about voting for imperfect candidates. Let's get to the first segment of the interview with Scott Aniol of G3 Ministries.

Scott, thank you so much for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio Program today as we talk about the primacy of worship. You've written several columns on this. Very good, highly recommended, and they're linked at our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) in addition to where they appear on the G3 website. Let's start out with something you wrote on your column on worshipping According to Scripture Alone. You say, "Calvin said that there are two principal things upon which Christianity stands and from which flow the whole substance of Christianity." And you quote Calvin here, "First, the mode in which God is duly worshiped, and second, the source from which salvation is to be obtained."

You said, "Remarkably, in listing what he," John Calvin, "believed to be the most important aspects of biblical Christianity, Calvin listed worship first and salvation second. For Calvin, salvation is important, but salvation is ultimately a means toward the end of rightly worshiping God." So Scott, expound further on the primacy of worship and how it really is the purpose for which each person was created by God to be a worshiper of Him.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

If you look at how scripture portrays God and His intent in all things and all things that He ordains, He is doing all things for His own glory. And that includes the creation of all things. It includes the creation of man. And so that's the purpose for which we were created is to bring Him honor and glory, which is the essence of worship. To worship is to rightly adore and magnify the greatness of God.

And that was God's intent all the way back in the garden. God created Adam and Eve within the garden, which very interestingly there are a lot of parallels between how Moses describes the Garden of Eden and how he later describes the tabernacle that God instructs Israel to build. And I think that was intentional by God because Eden was meant to be a sanctuary of God's presence in which His people would worship Him rightly. And of course, Adam and Eve failed in that by sinning in Genesis 3. And yet God's intent still stands. He wants the people that He has created to bring Him the glory that He deserves. And really the plan of redemption is not for its own sake then. The plan of redemption, the whole purpose of that is to bring to fruition what God originally intended in the garden, and that is to create worshipers for His own glory.

And so that's what Calvin meant there. Yes, salvation is important, and obviously, it is central to the storyline of scripture, but it serves a greater end and that is that God would be glorified through the worship of a redeemed people. And so that's where all of history is progressing toward and it's important that we then as redeemed people understand that that is our purpose. We are created to

glorify God. We are created to worship. And so it's very important that we think biblically about the nature of worship and how we ought to be approaching God in worship.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Well, I thought that was such an excellent point in the column you wrote there and something that we all need to know. And so we can order our lives around worship, and there's something even more important than salvation that that leads us to being able to properly worship God. Scott Aniol is our guest today here on the Christian Worldview, the Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief at G3 Ministries. Their website is [g3min.org](http://g3min.org).

Continue with this subject, this issue of worship. You say also in that same column going from the primacy of worship that's why we are here to worship God, to what worship must be regulated by. You say, "Acceptable worship must be regulated by scripture alone. This is why the Reformers," during the time of the Reformation, "believed that worship regulated by the Word was the most significant expression of the doctrine of sola scriptura."

John Knox, one of the great Reformers in Scotland said, "All worshiping, honoring or service invented by the brain of man and the religion of God without His own express commandment is idolatry." And you go on to say, "The only acceptable worship is that which He Himself has commanded, that's God Himself. Anything not commanded in scripture for worship is forbidden." And you get into this column, what is termed the regulative principle of worship. Could you explain what that is?

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Really, what you just quoted is a pretty succinct definition. The regulative principle says whatever is not prescribed in scripture for worship is therefore prohibited. And this principle flows naturally from the previous principle of the primacy of worship and the intent that God would be glorified in all things including His worship. If that's God's goal, if He is doing all things for His own glory, and that if our purpose is to worship Him, then it follows that He has the right and the prerogative to determine how He wants to be worshiped. We don't get to come up with our own ways of worship or decide worship in ways that please us best, but rather because it is all for God's glory, we ought to want to please God through our worship according to what He has prescribed.

And so that's the regulative principle, which historically came up during the Reformation in some of the debates between Reformers, is contrasted with what is sometimes now called the normative principle of worship, which says whatever is not forbidden for worship is permitted. So you can see the contrast there. And men like Luther, especially his followers, or Cranmer and the Anglican Church followed more of a normative principle, which is why they retained lighting of incense and lighting of candles and priestly vestments and some of those things from the Roman Catholic Church. But Calvin and the reformed wing of the Reformation, and then later Puritans and Baptists in England all held to this regulative principle insisting that if worship is going to bring God the glory that He deserves, then we need to limit ourselves to only that which God has prescribed in His Word.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

That's very good. And we see that in churches all over the place today that this isn't followed. The regulative principle of what scripture prescribes for worship. I'm going to ask you more about that in a second, but just one more quote from that column. You say, "Calvin noted all men have a vague general veneration of God, but very few really reverence Him. We ought to comport ourselves in corporate worship in a way that manifests reverence and awe. The way we dress for worship ought to manifest reverence and awe. The way we read scripture publicly and pray and preach ought to be performed in a manner that exhibits reverence and awe. How we pray, how we preach, how we conduct ourselves, how we dress, and how we sing. The manner of worship is not culturally neutral or mere preference. No. There is a manner of worship that pleases our flesh and there is a manner of worship that gives glory to God alone." So perhaps you could talk about, Scott, what you see as the required or requisite elements of a corporate worship service.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Very simply, if we're committed to again what has been called the regulative principle of worship, then we need to look to scripture to determine what elements God has prescribed for our worship. And specifically, since we're talking about the New Testament church, then we ought to find these prescriptions in the New Testament. Not that there's no value to the Old Testament, there certainly is, and there's a lot of overlap of course between worship in Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church, but there are changes. The Book of Hebrews, for example, deals with this. There are certain aspects of Old Testament worship that were mere shadows and now that Christ has come, the shadows have passed away. So that's why it's important, and Baptists in particular have emphasized this, that we need to look to the New Testament. What does the New Testament prescribe for corporate worship?

And we can very quickly and easily find explicit prescriptions of elements for worship such as the reading of scripture. Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Devote yourself to the public reading of scripture." We find similar commands given to the church in Colossae and 1 Thessalonians. And also, in that same text, in 1 Timothy 4, Paul commands Timothy to devote himself to exhortation and teaching. And then in 2 Timothy 4:2, he commands Timothy to preach the Word.

So we have the public reading of scripture prescribed. We have the preaching of scripture prescribed in 1 Timothy 2:1. Paul commands that supplications, and prayers, and intercessions be made. So prayers in Colossians 4:2, "Continue steadfastly in prayer." Ephesians 6:18 commands prayer. So we have a third biblically prescribed element of prayer. And then the fourth biblically prescribed element we find in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 where Paul commands believers who are gathered to sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So we have a command to sing there. And then fifth, in the great commission in which Christ is commissioning His apostles as the founders of the church to make disciples of all nations, we find a command there to baptize them. And so baptism being a biblically prescribed element. And then finally in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul told the Corinthian church that he was passing on the Lord's Supper to them having received it from the Lord Himself.

So these are the clear prescribed elements of corporate worship: reading the Word, preaching the Word, prayer, singing, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. These are what the New Testament prescribes. And again, historically, and I would argue biblically as well to add or subtract from these God-ordained elements of worship would, in essence, be to distrust the sufficiency of God's Word and we would fail to bring God the glory He deserves because He has the prerogative to tell us what elements He wants in our worship.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Okay. Very good. That is helpful. The things prescribed for worship. Number one, the public reading of scripture. Number two, the preaching of scripture. Number three, prayer. Four, singing. Five, baptism. And number six, remembering the Lord's death and resurrection, the Lord's Supper. And performing these elements with an attitude of reverence and awe for the God who created us.

Scott Aniol is our guest today here on the Christian Worldview of G3 Ministries. We have these columns linked at our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org). Also, we are offering the first month free of a subscription to G3 + where you can access unlimited video and audiobooks, eBooks, and much more from G3 Ministries. Again, go to our website to find out more about that.

When you're at [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), be sure to take advantage of our August sale where everything in the store is 20% or more off right now, including recent resource offerings like *Shepherds for Sale* by Megan Basham, or *Woke-Free Church* by recent guest Jeff Kliwer, or *Who Am I* by Martyn Iles of Answers in Genesis, or the always popular 15-part *Theo* animated video series. All right, much more coming up with Scott Aniol of G3 Ministries on the primacy of worship. I'm David Wheaton and you are listening to the Christian Worldview Radio Program.

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**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter. Order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry. Our topic today is the primacy of worship, and our guest is Scott Aniol, the Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries.

Several of your columns, if I read them correctly, were based on Hebrews 12, and specifically toward the end of that chapter and starting in verse 28, it says, "Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire." That's from Hebrews 12:28 and 29.

You write in that column, you say, "Worship is not something we initiate. We do not invite God down to us in worship. We do not perform for God in worship. No, worship is a response to something that we are receiving from God by grace alone. We are to be grateful. We are to worship because we are receiving something that we did not earn or merit and that is grace." So there's an issue you write

here, Scott, with regard to gratefulness as being the motivation or what inspires us to worship God. Can you explain that? How we can grow in gratefulness to God so that we worship with the right heart and motivation.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

I truly believe that gratefulness, thanksgiving really is at the center of true worship. And yes, this whole series was an exposition of that passage at the end of Hebrews 12. And I think what's very instructive is that even the word for thanksgiving or gratefulness, eucharistia has embedded in it the word charis, which is grace. There's an integral connection between the two. And what it emphasizes is that our worship is a response of gratitude to the person and work of God.

And I'm explicitly responding to what has become the dominant expectation in corporate worship today, largely because of the Pentecostalization of worship and modern evangelicalism where the expectation is we praise God so that He will come down and meet with us. Praise they believe is the way in which we experience the presence of God, and it becomes very much something that we do, a work by which we then experience whatever we define to be the presence of God. And what I'm arguing here from Hebrews 12, and there are many more passages that could flesh this out, is that worship is not something in which we do something in order to gain approval with God, or to call Him down, or to experience His presence. Rather, worship is a response to the person and nature of God.

And so how do we grow in that? We grow in that by continually immersing ourselves in the scriptures, reminding ourselves of the greatness of God, His character, His nature, reminding ourselves of His marvelous works. And hopefully, that leads us then to a humility, particularly when we recognize our own sinfulness. And we come then with a humility that says, "I am not here because I am worthy. I am not here to somehow invite God to come to me. No. Rather God in His grace and mercy has called me to come to Him and He has provided the means for that to happen. Therefore, I come with humility, yes, praise, also contrition over my sin." Ultimately, really centering on this gratefulness that we find here in Hebrews 12. This thanksgiving in response to the marvelous grace of God.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Yes, very well said. A hard attitude of gratefulness is so key to rightly worshiping God. Scott Aniol of G3 Ministries is our guest today here on the Christian Worldview. Your answer to that question segues well into the next one in that how do we draw near to God in worship? The scripture says in James 4:8, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." But you write in your column this idea of drawing near to God permeates the storyline of scripture. It is what Adam and Eve enjoyed as they walked with God in the cool of the day and you give other examples in scripture.

You conclude that section by saying, "To draw near to God is to enter into His very presence. To bask in His glory. To have perfect communion with Him in His presence. To draw near to God is the essence of worship." Another really important big statement there, Scott. But of course, the problem

is we're sinners and how do we draw near to God? How does that practically take place when we're sinners and the God we are worshiping and approaching is perfectly holy?

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

This is the core of the gospel which is the core of worship and it's a message we can find throughout scripture, and I just love the Book of Hebrews. In our church, we as elders just finished preaching through this book and this is one of the central messages of that book. In chapter 10, in verse 22, the author says, "Let us draw near." So there's that concept. If you find that phrase in either the Old or New Testament, it's referring to drawing near to the presence of God for communion and worship. As you mentioned, sin prevents that. So how do we draw near? "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

So worship is essentially drawing near to communion with God through the sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ by faith. So you can see there the essence of what it means for God's people to worship Him really is the same as the gospel itself. And this goes back to the very first discussion we had in Calvin's comment that salvation is toward the end of creating worshipers. The purpose of the gospel is to provide a means by which people can draw near to God and worship by faith.

So that's the only way. We can't come on our own merits because we're sinners. We have to come through Christ. We do so by faith with confident expectation of the promises of God. And when we do that, when we draw near by faith, we can be confident that we are in God's presence. That's what Hebrews 12 tells us. We have come to Mount Zion, to the city of a living God of the heavenly Jerusalem. We don't see or feel that. We shouldn't expect the presence of God to be somehow tangibly experienced. No, we accept it by faith, which is the conviction of things hoped for the assurance of things not seen. And so we draw near by faith, and we are confident that if we do so, drawing near by faith according to the means that God has prescribed in His Word, then we can know that we are in the presence of God, that we are fellowshiping with Him and we are bringing Him the glory that He deserves.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Scott Aniol is our guest today from G3 Ministries and we're talking about the primacy of worship. Such an important topic and just a couple more questions for you on this issue of worship, Scott. You say in another in your series of columns on worship, *Worship for the Glory of God Alone*. You say, "So many evangelicals today say they believe in *Sola Scriptura*, but their worship betrays their enslavement to the authority of culture and of self. They say that they believe in justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, but their worship betrays a works righteousness in which somehow what we do ushers us into God's presence." You've touched on that already.

"They say they believe in the glory of God alone, but their worship betrays the glory of self. Oh, how we need a fresh Reformation of worship today. Worship that embodies the great solas of the Reformation. Worship that is deeply rooted in the authority of scripture. Worship that renews us in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Worship that truly pleases God." And that was a summary statement I

believe on the series of columns that you have written that we have linked at our website and also at [g3min.org](http://g3min.org) for people to read for themselves. What is your exhortation then, Scott, to those who are church leaders, pastors, elders, listening today to evaluate their corporate worship?

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Well, ultimately, it really has to stem from the very first point we made and that is going to scripture. It is how we are worshiping. What God has intended, what God has commanded in His Word because we can't assume that we are bringing Him the glory that He deserves. We can't assume that we are worshiping with gratitude if we're just doing it on our own. We can't assume that we are coming by faith if we are simply creating our own means of worship. If we're inventing our own way in which we come into the presence of God.

So I would just urge any believer, period, especially those in leadership, pastors and others, to go to the Word, study the Word. What does the Word say about the nature of worship? What does the scripture command regarding our worship and the New Testament church? And then let's be satisfied with that. Let's not be chasing after experiences or some sort of emotional euphoria. Let's not be allowing the culture to influence how we worship or certainly unbelievers and what they will like and make them comfortable. And not even believers. Not even designing our worship based on what Christians want. We ought to be designing our worship, leading our worship, and participating in worship on the basis of what God has prescribed in His sufficient Word.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Very well said. And finally on this issue of worship, you've talked about church worship, public corporate worship today, but what about other types of worship? The individual worship that should be taking place in the believer's life as we read and pray and memorize God's Word on a daily basis? Maybe you could call that private individual worship. And then also family worship time as well that I know that you do with your family. Tell us how you order your individual worship with the Lord and also oversee or lead your family worship.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Well, the elements of worship that God has prescribed, sometimes referred to as the ordinary means of grace, are the same when it comes to corporate worship as they are for individual worship and family worship with two exceptions. And that, of course, is baptism and the Lord's Supper because they are inherently tied to and commanded for local gatherings of churches. Those two are reserved for the public gatherings of the church.

But the other elements, the reading of scripture, the explanation and exhortation that comes from scripture, singing, prayer, these things ought to be part of our daily practices. So as an individual, we ought to be reading the Word, we ought to be praying to the Lord. Good books that help to expound the Word or admonish us with the Word are helpful for our spiritual walk. We ought to be singing. It's a good practice even as an individual to sing unto the Lord. And so these are things that are glorifying to God but also are forming us and sanctifying us because they are all filled with the Word of God.



And then, yes, family worship is so important for fathers to lead their family, lead their children, lead their wife regularly in these practices as well. Our children and our wives need to have the Word read regularly. Hopefully, as the kids are growing older, they're having personal times of devotion with the Lord themselves, but as a family, we're gathering together. I'm reading the Word to them, explaining the Word. We sing together, we pray together. All of these elements I know because the Word says so, are what my family needs to lead them to Christ, to conform them into His image, and to sanctify them. So these things ought to be a regular pattern in our lives as individuals and families and then really the climax of it all should be the faithful gathering of God's people on the Lord's Day where we do this corporately together.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Well, as we head into this break, it's a perfect time to mention that we actually carry a book by Scott in our store on family worship. It's titled *Let the Little Children Come: Family Worship on Sunday and the Other Six Days Too*. I'll read the description of the book. In *Let the Little Children Come*, Scott Aniol strives to convince church leaders and parents that children best grow into faithful, mature worshipers of Jesus Christ when they're led to Jesus by their parents in the context of intergenerational church gatherings and in daily worship at home. Go to our store at [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) to order *Let the Little Children Come*, and it's 20% off as part of our August sale. So be sure to take advantage of that.

All right. We'll take a brief pause to tell you about some other ministry resources but coming up we're going to change gears from the primacy of worship in the context of the church, the family, and individually, into how worship is manifested in the political arena. You want to stay tuned for that. I'm David Wheaton and you're listening to the Christian Worldview Radio Program.

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**HOST: David Wheaton**

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Our topic today is the primacy of worship, and our guest is Scott Aniol, the Executive Vice President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries. In this final segment, we're going to get into how worship relates to politics and how Christians should think about casting their vote. Scott, with the Democratic National Convention, just having concluded, one particular sound bite came out from a White House Correspondent named April Ryan. She was speaking about some of the leaders of the Democrat Party, specifically Barack and Michelle Obama, and here's what she had to say.

**Audio Soundbite: April Ryan:**

She's looked like an everyday woman. Instead of being this iconic woman that you could see in *Vogue*, she stays the same. She cares about people and that's why people listen to her. And then with her husband, I mean I joke about this, but there's Jesus, HBCUs, and then there's Barack

Obama. It may change. It may change a little bit if Kamala Harris becomes president. But these are two people, people want to hear from, especially, Nicole, right now, as we've heard so much about this tension, if you will. These conversations about how to save the democracy that ultimately led to President Biden saying, "I'm going to step aside for the sake of the democracy to make sure that we can keep the republic."

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Okay. Again, that was a White House Correspondent named April Ryan being interviewed on a cable news channel talking about the Obamas, Barack and Michelle Obama, and that she said something to the effect that there's Jesus, and then there are the historically black colleges and universities, and then there are the Obamas, and then Kamala Harris would be up there as well. I mean this is clearly a worshiping situation if I've ever heard one. These are the people they worship. As you've watched the conventions, both Democrat convention, the Republican conventions, who or what would you say, Scott, is being worshiped? And then second part of that question is how would you frame what's at stake watching these conventions? What's at stake for the country and for Christians?

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Unfortunately, politics in this country have, I was just thinking this morning, I mean it's just become all theater. There's little substance on either side and there's a lot of celebrity worship on both sides, and it's unfortunate. We live in a sin-cursed world. We in some ways become spoiled as Christians in our country because we've enjoyed freedom for so long, but we can't be blind to the fact that even in the past when we felt like maybe things were a little better, perhaps things didn't seem quite as bad. Nevertheless, even politicians claiming to be Christian, although there absolutely are some faithful Christians in politics, many politicians claim to be Christians simply because they know it's going to get them votes. And that's really using the Lord's name in vain, which is an issue of worship.

It's a tragedy, but we have to remember that we do live in a sin-cursed world. God never promised that government would be perfect. God never promised that any nation would reach a state of perfection in this age. We need the perfect King to come and make that happen, which is Jesus Christ at His second coming. And so we have to have a proper, I believe, understanding and expectation for what the purpose of government is and to just simply do the best with what we have. There is a lot at stake. We see the persecution against the church rising, and I believe we live in our country, in our governmental system, we have the privilege of being able to vote and being involved, and I think we ought to do that. We ought to utilize the freedoms and the privileges that we have, and as much as we can, hold off the growth of the grossest forms of sin, and as much as we can, hold off the persecution that we know is coming.

And so we ought to do that, but with a healthy dose of reality, recognizing that ultimately the answer to all problems is the gospel of Jesus Christ and politics is never going to solve anything ultimately. It has its role and its purpose, but the ultimate thing we ought to be concerned with is spreading the gospel, seeing more and more people coming to faith in Christ, and then hopefully, the more Christians there are, the better things are. That ought to be our goal.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Scott Aniol with us today here on the Christian Worldview. I've noticed at the Democrat convention and watching it that there seems to be a very intentional effort to not run away from language that is associated with the Bible, or God, or scripture, and so forth. You might find that surprising but listen to this sound bite by Raphael Warnock. He is the senator from Georgia. He was a former minister, I believe in Martin Luther King Jr's church, I think, in Atlanta. But here's what he had to say criticizing Donald Trump for Trump having... I think Trump had a Bible come out or something like this, but he was criticizing Trump. But I'm more interested in the latter part of it, the sound bite here is 35 seconds long, where he gets into how he defines what true Christianity is. Here's Senator Raphael Warnock.

**Audio Soundbite: Senator Raphael Warnock:**

I saw him holding the Bible and endorsing a Bible as if it needed his endorsement. He should try reading it. It says, "Do justice, love, kindness, and walk humbly with your God." He should try reading it. It says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." It says, "Inasmuch as you've done it unto the least of these, you have done it also unto me."

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

That was Senator Raphael Warnock from Georgia talking about teachings he sees in scripture that are really true Christianity. In addition to that, Scott, you've no doubt heard about this organization that was just recently formed called Evangelicals for Harris, as in Kamala Harris. And they said recently on Twitter or X, in a similar vein to what we just heard from Raphael Warnock quote, "If you want to see Christ's love, it was on full display last night at the Democrat National Convention. From feeding the hungry to housing the unhoused to caring for our neighbors. Kamala Harris and her supporters are showing us a way aligned with His," as in Christ's, "teaching." These aren't just throwaway lines, Scott. There's a persuasion going on here trying to persuade people to say, "Hey, look, we're not the party of anti-God. We're actually the party that really is in alignment with God and scripture." What is your response to this kind of persuasion from the left?

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Well, I would just want to ask him, how is it loving your neighbor when you're murdering the most vulnerable neighbors among us? And that is preborn children. When that kind of thing is at the top of concerns for the Democratic Party, we're talking about people who are speaking out of both sides of their mouths. They're trying to use the scriptures and take passages out of context, frame scripture in such a way that defends their particular policy decisions and things that they want to happen in this country. But in essence, like I said earlier, all they're doing is taking the Lord's name in vain and they're taking scripture in vain.

And again, that happens on the Republican side too. It happened during the Republican convention, but the big difference is what's actually being emphasized and stressed and raised as the primary policy priorities that the two opposing candidates are going to be striving for. And you look at the Democratic policies and what you find is active and aggressive support of abortion, active and aggressive support of transgender LGBT, the whole alphabet emphases, transing of kids, and all of

these sorts of things. Not to mention the increasing persecution against true conservative biblical Christianity. And so this is a misapplication of scripture. It is taking the Lord's name in vain, and it is ultimately a worship of self in the name of the worship of God.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

You'll have Christians who agree with what you just said. The Democrat Party is very radical, much more promoting of that which is ungodly in rebelling against God. They see that, but then they look at the Republican Party, and they look specifically at Donald Trump, and they look at his personality mainly, I think. I don't think it's so much his policies, although he has softened, I think, personally on the issue of abortion. But he was the one that appointed justices that overturned Roe v. Wade as well too. So he's not making a policy on abortions, just that he personally has taken that stance, I think from a standpoint of he thinks that's what he has to do to win, up to 16 weeks or something like that. He doesn't have a strong opposition I don't think, to same-sex marriage and those kinds of things. But again, like you just said, he's not an outright aggressive advocate of these things.

But that being said, Scott, you'll get Christians who will say, "Well, there's no biblical justification to support just a lesser of two evils. Where is that in scripture?" They'll say. They'll say, "I'm not going to vote," or, "I'm going to vote third party." What are your thoughts on the issue of voting for, "the lesser of two evils"? Or isn't that always our choice actually? But how should we be considering this as we go? And I'm not asking you to make an endorsement of any particular candidate at all. Just thinking through our framework, our mental framework for casting a vote.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Well, I want to first acknowledge this is a sticky issue. This is difficult. It's not easy, it's not black and white. I respect those Christians who really struggle with, should I vote for Trump considering his personal immorality? Should I vote for Trump considering, like you said, even the softening of the GOP platform on the issue of abortion? I get it. I understand it. What I would say, and I'll just explain how I've thought through this, is a couple things real quick. Number one, you mentioned where in scripture. Well, again, this is where we need to understand God's intent for government. We're not voting for a pastor. We're not voting for a Christian prince. We're not voting for the Christianization of society. As much as we would love that God has not promised it until Jesus comes again. We're voting for whatever we can do to hold back sin.

I mean, that's ultimately the purpose of government. The purpose of government is not to advance the kingdom of Christ. That role was never given to government. No, the purpose of government is to hold back sin as much as possible, to provide peace and life protection until Jesus comes again. So I think we need to ask which choice, whether it's one of the two parties or if someone's thinking about not voting or a third party, what choice is going to best hold back sin as long as possible? And I think one of the things we need to think about is to not put too much weight and stock in the power of the presidency. We might look at Trump and I think we should look at him and say, "He does not appear to be a true Christian." We need to acknowledge that. But then we need to ask if he were elected, what kind of other people would he be bringing with him?

People in the cabinet, but even further down the ladder, people who actually make things happen. And then ask the same thing on the other side with Harris and the Democratic Party. And my conclusion is it's not even close. That the kinds of people that would be put into place to make things happen if Trump were elected are far more trustworthy than those who would serve under Harris. And would help to again, hold back sin longer than if the alternative were elected. I know a head of a influential missions agency who I've heard say that when Trump was in power the last time, missionaries around the world in his agency, and most of his missionaries are in very unreached and highly persecuted areas, he said they were far freer to spread the gospel under Trump because nations around the world were afraid what Trump would do if they persecuted Christians. Under Biden, persecution has ramped up.

And so that's just one example of how it's not really about a man or in this case a woman on the Democratic side. It's not really about the President, it's about the policies and it's about the kind of people who will be put in other positions even really far down in the bureaucracy, and people who actually make things happen. And there might be a day when there's absolutely no difference between the two parties, but we're not there yet. And I would say there are a lot more trustworthy, morally sound, respectable kinds of people and God-pleasing policies on the GOP side than there are on the Democratic side.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

That's very helpful, Scott, to think through how Christians should think about voting in the purpose of government. Thank you for coming on the Christian Worldview Radio Program today, especially with regard to the primacy of worship being the chief purpose and end of man. All of God's best and grace to you and your family and G3 Ministries.

**GUEST: Scott Aniol:**

Thanks so much. Enjoyed being here.

**HOST: David Wheaton:**

Again, Scott Aniol, the Executive Vce President and Editor-in-Chief of G3 Ministries has been our guest today. When I read these columns by Scott on the primacy of worship, as in that is the chief purpose and duty of every person to worship God, I was just convicted that we all needed to be reminded to keep first things first in our minds and in our hearts, especially during a very turbulent political season where much of the attention is being focused on that. If you lose track of your purpose and mission to worship, glorify, honor God in every aspect of life, you get off track and start going down wrong roads.

This is where faith comes in because the things of the world that are right there for us to see and touch, that we tend to pursue because we think they will bring lasting happiness and joy, whether it's relationships, pleasure, money, some possessions, position, marriage, children work, these aren't necessarily bad things, but they only provide temporal satisfaction because God created you and me primarily to know, love, and above all, worship Him. And when you pursue nearness to God with a heart of worship because He is worthy of that worship, that is where lasting satisfaction and joy come

from, and that's where the faith comes in. Trusting God that worshiping Him is what most pleases Him and brings us the most joy.

But like Scott said, the only way to properly worship God is to first be reconciled to Him. God is holy, holy, holy. And yet we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and the wages of that sin is death, both physical and spiritual death. Separation from God for eternity in hell. He's a just God. "But God," in Romans 5:8, "demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." 2 Corinthians 5:21, "God made Christ who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." So God provided a way that we can be reconciled to Him through the death and resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ.

I urge you, if you have never done so, obey Christ's command to repent and believe in this gospel. And God will forgive you and grant you eternal life and lead you into the way that you can fulfill your purpose in life to worship Him. And as you pursue the ordinary means of grace that Scott was talking about today through individual worship and family worship and corporate worship at church, you will draw nearer to God and better worship Him. You can find out more by going to our website [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) and clicking on the page, "What Must I Do to Be Saved?"

Just a reminder that our August sale is going on right now with 20% off or more on everything in our store. You can order the book we mentioned today that Scott Aniol wrote about worship. *Let the Little Children Come: Family Worship on Sunday and the Other Six Days Too*. Or you can order Megan Basham's, bestselling book *Shepherds for Sale*, or *Woke-Free Church* by recent guest Jeff Kliever, and take advantage of the offer to get your first month free on a subscription to G3 Plus.

Thank you for joining us today on the Christian Worldview Radio Program, and for your support of this nonprofit radio ministry. Let's remember that Jesus Christ and his Word are the same yesterday, and today, and forever. So until next time, think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm.

The mission of the Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript, or find out what must I do to be saved, go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) or call toll-free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by The Overcomer Foundation. To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter, or contact us, visit [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), call 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota, 55331. That's Box 401, Excelsior, Minnesota, 55331. Thanks for listening to the Christian Worldview.