

Family Values Kit

**BIBLICAL CITIZENSHIP: ENGAGING THE
CULTURE FOR YOUR FAMILY**



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BIBLICAL CITIZENSHIP IS ENGAGING THE CULTURE FOR *YOUR FAMILY* AND *YOUR VALUES*

What comes to mind when you hear the term “public policy”?

Christians embrace the biblical command to engage the culture for Jesus Christ; yet just one mention of the “P” words—public policy or politics—and there may be an awkward silence and a quick shift in the conversation.

Did you know that engaging the culture for Christ and engaging in the culture are inextricably intertwined? Indeed, they are!



We hope this month's free resource will inspire you and your family as you “connect the dots” between the two in a fun, creative way! And don't forget to join in the conversation. Let us know how your family engages the culture.

[Facebook.com/FocusOnTheFamily](https://www.facebook.com/FocusOnTheFamily)



Family Activities

HEROES OF FAITH

No matter the age or the era, everyone has a hero they admire, look up to or try to emulate. Athletes and movie stars are typical cultural icons, but what about “Heroes of the Faith”?

Do you have one?



William Wilberforce, an 18th-century advocate for the abolition of the slave trade, is often cited as a Christian hero. In fact, the challenges of today’s moral decline and the epidemic growth of human trafficking are remarkably similar to those Wilberforce faced. With conviction, integrity, courage and, most importantly, perseverance, he stood by his God-given convictions—oftentimes alone.

Nevertheless, the late Chuck Colson calls Wilberforce the quintessential example of how Christians can—and should—effectively engage the culture and the public square.



“There is no one in history who has had more of an influence on my life than William Wilberforce ... He was a young man rising in Parliament in the 1780s, and then became a very active Christian. He took on the campaign to abolish the slave trade because that was the most heinous violation of human rights ever ... He made this successful stand and the slave trade was abolished in 1807. Slavery itself was abolished in 1833, five days before he died.

“The interesting thing is he never let his focus be just politics. He knew that you couldn’t change things with just politics. He famously said, ‘God has given me two great objectives: the abolition of the slave trade and the reformation of manners.’ He understood that you could end this systemic evil; but unless you at the same time worked to change the attitudes and habits and beliefs of the people, you weren’t going to solve the problem. He did both. He took on a hundred different causes over those next 35 years that he lived. He should be a model for us today as to how we engage the public square.”

Discuss as a family who your heroes of faith are.

Family Activities

Defining Our Family's Values Worksheet

Try this exercise as a family to help determine values that are important to you.

True or False: "Our Family Believes ..."	True or False	What does Scripture say about this issue?	Ways our family can demonstrate this belief:
Every child should have the best chance to have a mom and a dad.		Gen. 1:27-28 Deut. 5:16 Prov. 23:22	
We should protect those who are unable to protect themselves, such as preborn babies, the elderly and sick, the disabled and orphans.		Ps. 68:5 Ps. 82:3-4 Is. 1:17 James 1:27	
We should not take advantage of those who are already disadvantaged.		Ex. 22:22 Deut. 24:17 Ps. 82:3	
We should work hard for our money, not try to "get rich quick."		Ecc. 5:12 Prov. 14:23 Prov. 28:19-22 I Tim. 6:6-11	
There's no "safe sex" except inside of marriage, with your husband or wife.		Prov. 6:32-33 I Cor. 6:18-20 Heb. 13:4	
God designed sex for a man and a woman when they are married to each other.		Ex. 20:14 Matt. 19:4-6 I Cor. 7:2-4	
As Christians, we are called to be "salt and light" in our culture, helping shape it according to our biblical values and worldview.		Is. 42:5-9 Matt. 5:13-16	

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Family Activities

True or False: “Our Family Believes ...”	True or False	What does Scripture say about this issue?	Ways our family can demonstrate this belief:
As Christian Americans, we have the duty to be engaged in our system of government and make our voices heard for biblical and family values.		Matt. 5:13-16 Rom. 13:1-7 I Tim. 1:8-11 II Tim. 2:1-4	
Family is the people we are related to by birth, adoption and marriage.		Eph. 5:22-6:4 I Tim. 5:1-8	
God created family in the very beginning and is the Father of those who are saved through His Son’s death on the cross.		Gen. 2:18-25 John 1:10-13 Rom. 8:12-17 Eph. 1:3-14	
Every child should be able to say grace or participate in voluntary, student-led prayer while at school.		Matt. 19:13 Phil. 4:6-7 I Thess. 5:17	
Every child should be able to include “under God” when they recite the Pledge of Allegiance in school.		Rom. 13:1 Eph. 1:15-23 Heb. 11:3	
God created man with a job (ruling and subduing the earth, even before the Fall) and having a productive job that provides for your family is honorable.		Gen. 1:28 Col. 3:17 I Tim. 5:8 II Tim. 2:6	

Family Activities

Encouraging Family Resources

FOR PARENTS



Read “Reversing the Effects of (Moral) Decay,” featured in the February 2012 issue of *Focus on the Family Citizen*® magazine. If you want to inspire your family with more everyday heroes of the faith, subscribe to *Citizen* magazine!

[Click here or scan to learn more about *Citizen* magazine](#)



FOR FAMILY



Focus on the Family Radio Theatre®: *Amazing Grace: The Inspirational Stories of William Wilberforce, John Newton and Olaudah Equiano*

[Click here or scan to purchase](#)



(Available Sept. 15, 2012) Focus On The Family Radio Theatre®: Charles Dickens' timeless classic *Oliver Twist*. This epic drama not only sheds a light on the plight of the orphan (better known in the U.S. as children in foster care), it's also a clarion call for Christians to be engaged in the issues affecting their communities—not leave it for the government to resolve.

[Click here or scan to purchase](#)



FOR ADULTS



Are you looking for a small group curriculum that discusses the importance and relevance of living out your Christian worldview in daily life? Then check out *Focus on the Family's The Truth Project*®, a DVD-based curriculum comprised of 12 video lessons.

[Click here or scan to purchase](#)



FOR STUDENTS



How do you respond to a friend who questions God's existence or the Bible's reliability? TrueU™ is the perfect resource for students of all ages who desire to strengthen their faith. Ten 30-minute sessions available on four DVDs.

[Click here or scan to purchase](#)



Just for Parents

Advocating on your children's behalf—guarding their innocence, teaching them how to stand up against the pressures to conform to the culture and be “salt and light” in their spheres of influence—can be a daunting task for any parent.

That's why we want to come alongside you and give you the tools you'll need to answer the tough questions, and to help “connect the dots” in the minds of your children between faith, social issues and public policy.



Policy Primer for Parents

CitizenLink, the public policy affiliate of Focus on the Family, had a chance to interview the late Chuck Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship Ministries and the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, about biblical citizenship. His concise responses are tailor-made to be a social policy primer to the most common misconceptions about Christian involvement.

1. I'm just so busy. I don't have time to even think about politics or public policy.

“The child they're raising is going to be shaped not only by their paternal/maternal responsibility, but by the culture around us. We are products of both nature and nurture. And there's no way you can have that child, no matter how well you've protected them, go off to a public school today without having everything that you believe to be sacred challenged. So you've got to care about what's going on. I know what it is to be busy and work hard, and be preoccupied with things. [But] the same way you need a devotional time in the morning, you also need a time when you're reflecting on what's going on in the world around you and how you can be engaged in it.”

2. So what is the proper role of every Christian?

“Christians have a duty to be engaged in the political process. The very least we should be doing is voting. We should be the best of citizens. We should bring the values of the kingdom of God to bear in the kingdom of man.”

3. What about the so-called “Separation of Church and State”?

“There are people today saying we Christians shouldn't be involved with these things (public policy and politics), and to just be a faithful presence where we are. That's bad advice. We need to be involved with the world around us, because we live as Christians with a worldview which is in conflict with the worldview of the society we live in. We should be constantly, winsomely, lovingly pushing Christian truth into the public square.”

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Just for Parents

4. What are the most important social policies parents should care about?

"I think it's the most important thing going on in America today in terms of policy; to be able to take a stand on the major moral issues of the day. Life, family and marriage, and religious liberty are the three burning issues. Those are the threshold to all other issues."

5. What does being engaged in the culture look like, practically speaking?

"[It] means voting. It means getting involved in politics. It means arguing before the school board. It means all the things Christians should do as citizens. But don't put your element of trust there. Politics has become so big and powerful and controlled by the special interests that the only way it's going to be reformed is the culture. And when you stop to think about it, politics is simply a reflection of the values of the culture. You change the culture, you will change the politics. If politics is sick, it means the culture is sick, and we Christians are responsible for the culture. So get engaged in culture to begin to change the public attitudes because that will be reflected ultimately in how the country is changed. I hope everybody gets involved and gets active and prays."



If you're concerned about any of these important questions—or curious about how you can make your voice heard despite the busyness of everyday life—we invite you to dig into these resources:

Free Encouraging Broadcasts

One of the many ways that we as Christians can engage the culture for Christ is to start in the home, with our children, by raising them up to be leaders in their own spheres of influence. Today's children are tomorrow's voices of faith, and we have some great resources to help you and your family learn how you can be a part of influencing our culture with God's Word and the love of Jesus Christ.

Click the links below to enjoy these free broadcasts!



Two-part broadcast:
"Heroes: Teaching Kids
Character and Integrity"

[Click here or scan
to download](#)



Adventures in Odyssey®:
"Something Significant"

[Click here or scan
to download](#)

Just for Teens

Connecting the Dots: Are You in the “Know”?

Appropriate for ages 13+

Challenge Level: Easy to Moderate

Test your knowledge about why specific family members believe the way they do. Can you guess how they'll respond and why? With a pencil and this sheet of paper in hand, ask the following four questions:

Interviewee: Grandparents or Aunts/Uncles	Interviewee: Parents
Question: Who did you choose for U.S. president the first time you voted? Why?	Question: Which political party best reflects your values? Why?
Answer:	Answer:
Bonus Question: If you could go back in time, knowing what you know now, would you make the same selection?	Bonus Question: Have you always aligned with this party? Why?
Answer:	Answer:
Interviewee: Parents	Interviewee: Any Elected Official (local, state or federal)
Question: What are your views on the role of government? Why?	Question: What motivated you to run for this elected position?
Answer:	Answer:
Bonus Question: Did you always hold this view? If not, why not?	Bonus Question: What do you hope to accomplish while in office?
Answer:	Answer:

Just for Pre-teens

Connecting the Dots: Participate by Learning About the Political Process

Connecting the Dots: Participate And Learn About the Political Process

Appropriate for: Ages 9-14

Challenge Level: Easy to Moderate

Test your knowledge by locating select words that reflect our country's political process. Words will be either down or across. Good luck!

D	R	Q	S	G	H	L	M	X	K	L	L	U	I	P
T	A	V	C	I	A	E	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	S
E	M	Q	I	B	R	G	C	J	V	H	B	R	G	H
B	P	E	T	I	T	I	O	N	L	S	I	L	V	A
A	R	T	I	Z	O	S	Y	H	A	T	W	R	E	C
L	E	P	Z	O	N	L	O	C	I	V	I	C	S	O
L	S	W	E	M	R	A	U	F	Q	V	F	A	X	N
O	I	B	N	E	J	T	R	E	M	F	P	U	L	G
T	D	F	S	N	K	I	A	D	Q	T	S	W	U	R
W	E	B	H	A	J	O	H	N	I	D	V	I	N	E
F	N	R	I	Q	U	N	D	E	R	G	O	D	R	S
N	T	A	P	I	R	B	X	M	V	O	T	B	R	S
I	O	V	E	L	D	G	Z	A	L	F	E	L	U	K
F	T	E	R	U	K	O	O	L	Y	M	R	C	V	T
F	O	U	N	D	I	N	G	F	A	T	H	E	R	S

Voter
Legislation
Citizenship
Congress
Civics
Under God
Petition
Freedoms
Founding Fathers
Ballot

Bonus Challenge

Can you find another elected position in the U.S. government?
(Hint: It starts with the letter P.)

Just for Kids

Connecting the Dots: Pin the Tail on the Donkey (and Elephant)

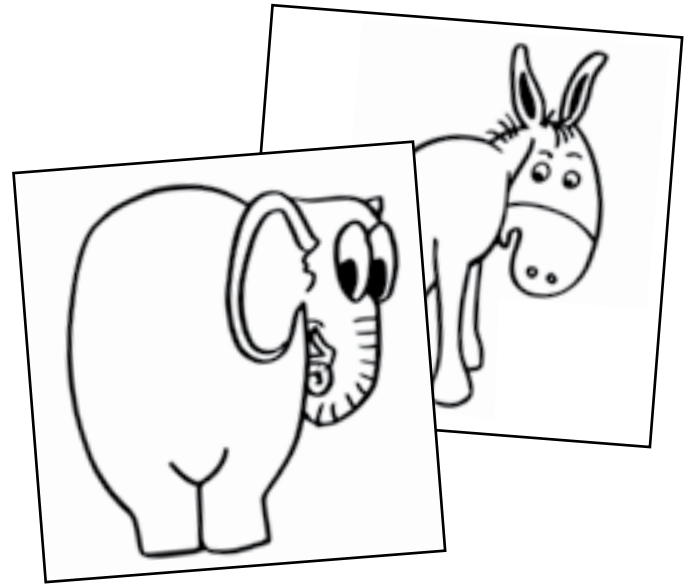
Appropriate for ages 5-8

Challenge Level: Easy

Pin the Tail on the Donkey has been a mainstay of birthday parties everywhere. However, this version includes a donkey and an elephant—the mascots of the two parties that make up our political system.

Instructions:

1. Ask your parents to help you cut out the images of the donkey and elephant, found on the following pages.
2. Mount the images with removable tape on a wall.
3. Blindfold one player and place the tail of one of the animals in their hands.
4. Spin the blindfolded player in circles a few seconds until they are a bit dizzy and lose their sense of direction.
5. Ask the blindfolded player to place the tail on the end of the correct animal.
6. After they place the tail, remove the blindfold.
7. Repeat steps 3-6 with each additional player. Leave all the tails wherever they've been placed until each player has had a chance to play.
8. Determine the winner—whoever has placed the correct tail closest to the correct spot on the correct animal.

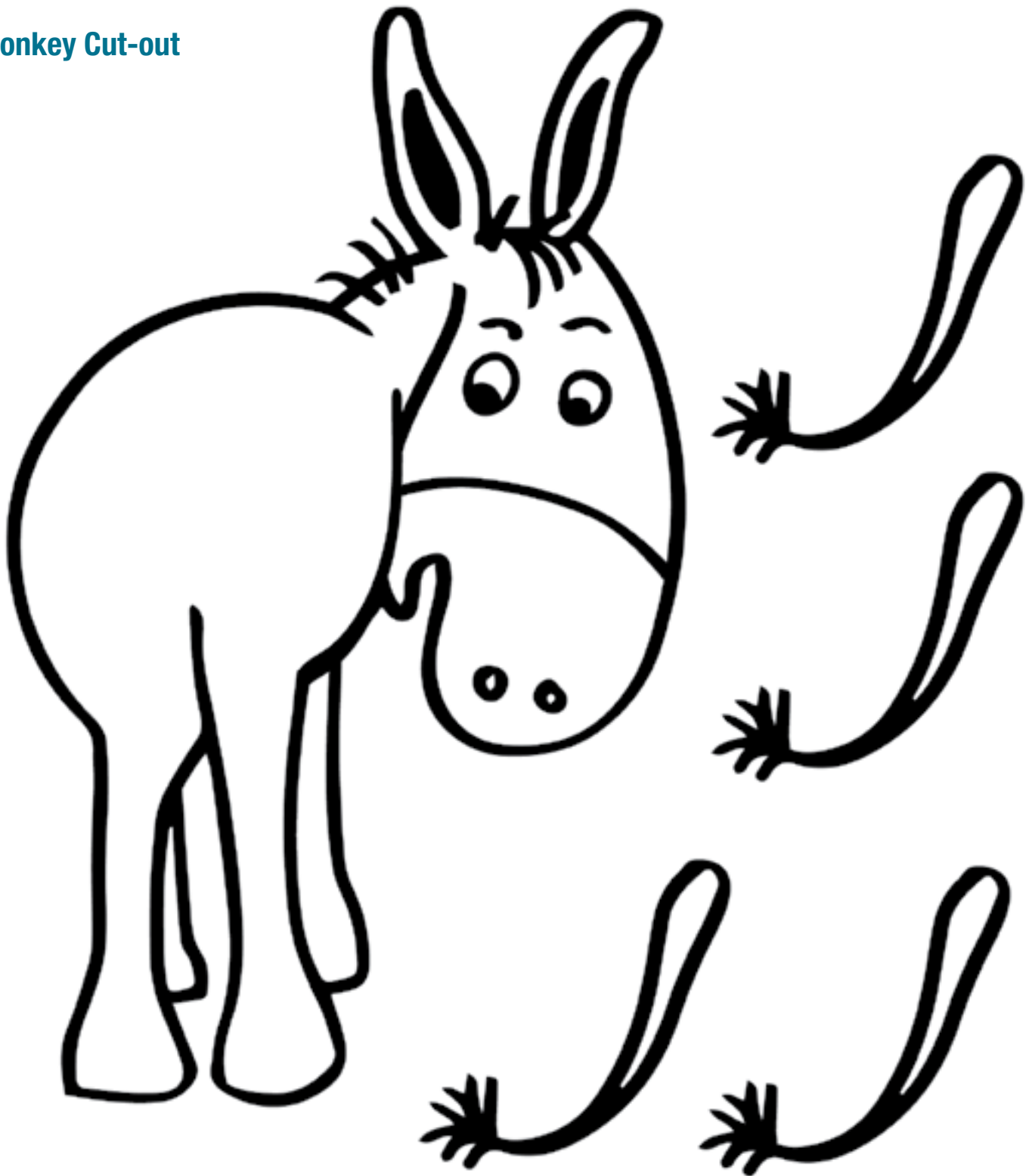


Supplies Needed:

- Blindfold(s)
- Scissors
- Adhesive Tape (preferably double-sided)
- Small prize(s) for the winner (dollar store item, piece of gum or candy, etc.)

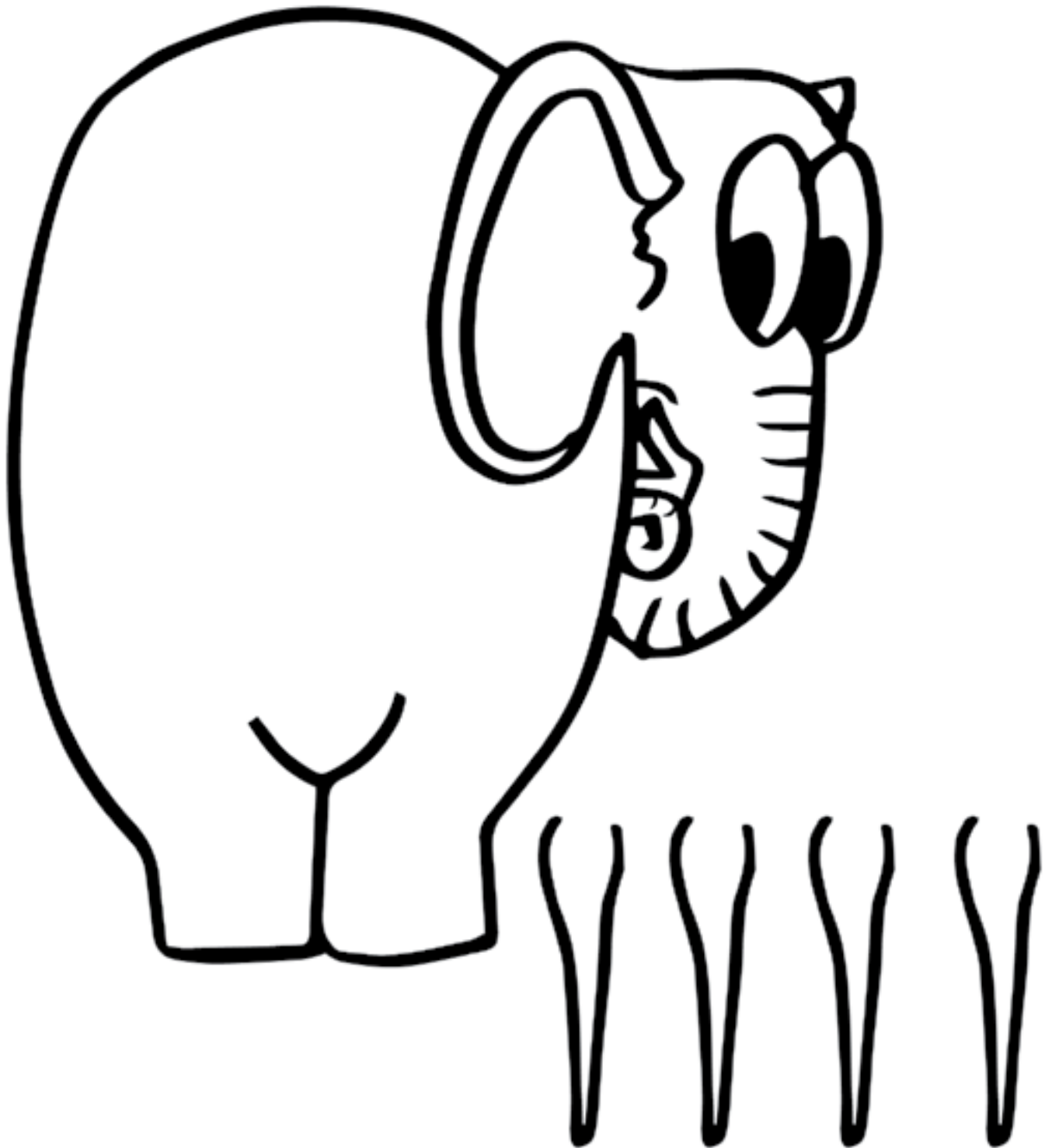
Just for Kids

Donkey Cut-out



Just for Kids

Elephant Cut-out



Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote



Voter Registration

by Tom Minnery, Senior Vice President, Government and Public Policy, Focus on the Family

I was a young reporter covering my first big election, a U.S. Senate race in New York featuring a colorful candidate named Daniel Patrick Moynihan. I'll never forget what happened one morning in New York City.

I was following Moynihan through several campaign stops. To his first audience he shouted a question: "How many are registered to vote?" About half of the people raised their hands. At the next stop he asked again, with a bit less enthusiasm, and he got the same result. I happened to be behind him that time, and I could see his shoulders slump a little. At his third stop, he didn't even bother to ask.

I have often thought back to that morning, wondering why anyone who wasn't registered to vote would bother to hear a candidate speak in the heat of a campaign. I suppose that the right to vote has become so routine that we forget what a privilege it is. But we shouldn't. We all recall those wonderful news photos from January 2005, when Iraqi citizens, newly freed from oppression and granted the right to vote for the first time in a general election, proudly held up purple-stained fingers to show they had indeed participated.

Their exuberance reminds us how valuable free elections are, particularly when the absence of elections leads to tyranny, as it did so tragically in Iraq. By the way, the turnout in Iraq that year, despite murderous threats from al-Qaida, was 70 percent of eligible voters. Two months before in the U.S., our own general election turnout was 58 percent. Not in the last 100 years has our own voter participation matched that of Iraq's newly enfranchised citizens in 2005.

Our freedoms depend on active citizens who understand some basic moral principles—right from wrong, good from bad—and who take the time to find and support candidates who will act on those principles. That's why Focus on the Family has been emphasizing all year the importance of people registering and voting. We expect to be able to report to you in a few months how many people actually did so as a result of our efforts and your prayers and financial support.

This basic privilege of citizenship should never be taken for granted, and it's never too early to begin impressing it on the hearts of our children. Here are some activities families can engage in to be sure that as children grow, they understand the importance of voting and they look forward to that important day when they, too, can participate as informed voters.

Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote

Activity for 0- to 3-year-olds

A very young child won't understand an abstract concept such as voting. However, here's a simple activity to teach your toddler about the election process.

Line up three kitchen chairs, and place one of your toddler's three favorite stuffed animals on each chair. Tell all your children that you'll hold an "election" to determine which stuffed animal will join the family for dinner.

Give everyone a small square of paper (the secret ballot), and have each person vote for one of the three choices. Your toddler can draw a simple picture of his favorite, or you can jot down his vote.

Collect the ballots, tally the votes, announce the winner and pin a paper star to the stuffed animal's chest to make him the winner of the election. Explain that in America we have the privilege to vote for our leaders, in the same way your family voted for your favorite stuffed animal.

—Dr. Bill Maier

From God's Word

To help a child learn to make responsible decisions, parents have much to teach through modeling.

**"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."
(1 Corinthians 11:1)**

Developmental Milestones

As you teach about elections, consider what's going on developmentally with your toddler:

Like the adolescent, the 2-year-old is undergoing major changes in his body and mind; he is still learning about the limits of his power and independence, and he tends to feel intensely about nearly everything. If he likes something, he can be ecstatic about it . . . If he wants something and you won't let him have it, you may be shocked by the intensity of his reaction.



Taken from the *Complete Guide to Baby & Child Care*, published by Tyndale House Publishers Inc. © 1997, 2007 Focus on the Family.

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Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote

Activity for 4- to 7-year-olds

You can help your preschooler or school-age child understand the concept of “majority rule”—where we abide by the decision of the majority (even when we disagree).

Reserve a Saturday afternoon for your kids to do an activity of their choosing. The choices should have a similar fun quotient, such as: 1. Play at a neighborhood park; 2. Swim at a local pool; or 3. Go out for ice cream. Note: Choose activities that will “split the vote” among your kids.

Have family members vote for their favorite, tally the votes and announce the winning activity. One or more of your children may be unhappy with the result. Empathize with the “losers,” and explain that although disappointed, they’ll need to respect the outcome of the election.

While you’re enjoying your ice cream (that’s what I’d choose), explain that in the United States we don’t have a king or dictator who makes decisions for us. Instead, we (the people) have the privilege and responsibility to sign up to vote and then select leaders who represent our values.

—Dr. Bill Maier

From God’s Word

As your kids hear about the coming elections, now is a good time to discuss God’s desire for us to submit to our country’s chosen leaders.

**“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”
(Romans 13:1)**

Developmental Milestones

As you teach your child about choices and majority rule, consider what’s going on developmentally at ages 4 to 7 years old:

Developments in your child’s intellect and speech will enable you to communicate with him in much more sophisticated ways. He will still be intensely curious about the world around him and is now better equipped to learn about it. More important, he will also want to understand how you see things both great and small and what is important to you . . . This wide-eyed openness will not last forever. While you will greatly influence his thinking throughout childhood, during the coming months you will have an important window of opportunity to lay foundations that will affect the rest of his life.



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Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote

Activity for 8- to 12-year-olds

You can use this activity to teach your tween about the democratic process and inspire him to help those in need.

Explain that your family will donate money to a ministry or charity. Choose two or three charities, and help your tween research each organization's mission. For example, you might look into Compassion International or World Vision. You could also visit a church-run food bank.

Let each family member make a persuasive case for a particular charity, explaining why he or she believes that their organization is worthy of your family's donation.

After everyone's "campaign speech," tell them that your family will use the democratic process to decide. Have everyone vote for the organization they feel is most deserving of the family's contribution. Some family members may be disappointed with the election's outcome. Explain that although an organization (or a political candidate) may have fine qualities, they may fail to garner enough votes to win. Talk about how persuasion can sway the outcome. Also point out how citizens have to choose to vote in order to have a say in the process.

—Dr. Bill Maier

From God's Word

As your tween grows, continue to teach biblical values that inform good decisions, including the choice of good leaders.

"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:5-7)



My Vote Matters

Check out "A Single Vote," an Adventures in Odyssey® audio drama in which Whit tells about how a single vote can make a difference. Find it in the *Heroes* album.

[Click here](#) or scan to purchase

Developmental Milestones

As you discuss the democratic process with your tween, consider what's happening with his mental and emotional development:

Plenty is going on—physical growth, maturing emotions, the acquisition of a host of intellectual and physical skills, the shaping of moral values and, yes, the gradual approach to that eventful transition to adulthood known as adolescence. All of these changes are important and need plenty of parental guidance, prayer and input. This is not time for Mom and Dad to put their parenting skills on autopilot as their child cruises through the elementary grades.



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Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote

Activity for 13- to 18-year-olds

Teens are learning about citizenship and democracy at school. As the election approaches, it's also likely that they've noticed the avalanche of radio and TV commercials advocating for particular candidates. Ask your teen what they've heard about candidates or political parties. Then, explain what you know about a certain candidate or political party. Don't be afraid to state your opinion, but support your position with reasonable arguments.

For example, you might say, "We think that Mrs. Smith is the best candidate for governor because she believes that people who work hard should be allowed to keep more of their own money." Then explain what taxation is and what percentage of each dollar you earn goes to federal, state and local taxes. You might also say, "I won't vote for Mr. Green because the U.S. Army says he lied about his military service. We need to be able to trust our political leaders."

Talk about the responsibility and privilege of voting, and explain how voting is a way to be involved in government and culture. Check out FocusOnTheFamily.com/socialissues for more about how your involvement in the political process is a continuation of your faith.

Consider taking your children, of all ages, with you to your polling place on Election Day. This will show your kids that you're serious about voter responsibility.

—Dr. Bill Maier

From God's Word

Encourage your teen to seek God's wisdom as she embarks on the great responsibility she has to influence the political process as well as those around her.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." (James 1:5)

Developmental Milestones

With teens, you're able to have in-depth conversations about how voting affords the opportunity to represent your values. Here's what's going on developmentally:

Teens tend to find at least one group they identify with that provides friendships, fun and a sense of identity. Church and service organizations, athletics, performing arts, academics and even political/social activism will bring kindred spirits together. Idealism may flourish during these years, and commitments made to God and basic values can be fervent and life-changing. If you share one or more of these interests, you can cement deep and satisfying bonds with your teenager.



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Teaching Your Children Why Christians Should Vote

Encouraging Teens to Become Informed Voters

In our nation, citizens are granted the extraordinary privilege to vote at age 18. As your teen approaches voting age, discuss the importance of being politically and culturally engaged.

Talk with your teen about current events and happenings from your community, discussing these events from a biblical worldview. Have your teen make a list of seven or eight issues that matter to her. Then have her weigh the candidates based on key issues or platforms that the candidates hold or support. Have your teen gather information on how each candidate voted in any previous elected position they may have held as well. Visit CitizenLink.com for information about current events and topics related to the election.

Also, TeenPact® Leadership Schools offer four-day classes held at the state capitols of 38 states. TeenPact students meet officials, interview lobbyists, view campaign disclosures, improve their public speaking skills, conduct their own TeenPact legislature and analyze public policy from a biblical worldview. Learn more at TeenPact.com. This new information may help equip and inform your teen as she becomes a registered voter.

Assist your teen with registering to vote. Each state has its own process, but in recent years, states have made voter registration easier. Visit Commit2Vote2012.com to find out your state's requirements. Remember: Some states have a registration deadline 30 days before Election Day.

If your teen attends college in a different state, there are two registration options. If she is a legal resident of the state where she attends school, she can register and vote in that state. If she lives in a dorm, she most likely has residency in her home state (the address on her driver's license) and can vote by absentee ballot.



Commit2Vote2012.com