

This Easter, don't let politics define forgiveness

The following commentary by Bob Vander Plaats [was first published at CNN.com](#).

In the past week, both Erin Burnett of CNN and Katy Tur of MSNBC have engaged in a national conversation about evangelicals and forgiving a most controversial subject: Donald Trump.

While there is value in these discussions, there is danger in looking at forgiveness and faith through the lens of politics. As we head into Easter weekend, I want us to look higher than headlines – to look through God's eyes, rather than our own.

For God doesn't look at us like we look at each other, doesn't judge as we judge, and isn't swayed by politics. The Bible insists that God holds us all to the same standard: his own perfection. And against that standard, we all sin and fall short of his glory. None of us is righteous. None of us has merited his favor, and we all deserve his judgment. Worse yet, the Bible says, the judgment for our sin is death.

This sounds like bad news, but to Christians, this message is the beginning of very good news. Why? Because of Easter.

We are entering the weekend when Christians remember the death of Jesus, who took our place of punishment upon a cross. He died in our place, that God's justice would be paid. And that's just the beginning of the good news.

For this savior who took our punishment didn't stay dead. He rose again. He conquered death, leaving sin behind, and he invites every sinner to come to him and find forgiveness in taking our sin upon himself.

He invites every sinner to join him in his resurrection, so

that we, too, may rise from the dead and have eternal life. If you repent from your sin and turn to new life through faith in Christ, then God sees you through a new lens, judges you by a new standard, that of his spotless son. God will pronounce you forgiven and clean and new. That IS great news!

Yet we must remember that God is no “respector of persons.” In other words, he holds everyone to the same perfect standard, whether peasant or president or pastor. And he stands ready to forgive all who would repent and believe.

Those who believe, however, are also called to be obedient. To follow the God they believe in. And no occupation is excused from this obedience. When we come to have faith in Christ, it necessarily impacts everything we do. We are not only called to believe in Christ; we are called to be like Christ.

This Easter, don't let politics hijack the good news. Rather, let us use the national conversation to share the truth of what Christ has done and is doing for us. Let the message you share ring true for young and old, rich and poor, president or pastor. And let us ask God to help us see all people through his eyes.

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