

a choice about Jesus: Will we receive Him as Lord and Saviour or reject Him for ever? He has died for us; He has risen from the dead and He is alive today. We need to choose this day whom we will serve. He is not a candidate. He is the Saviour of the world.

Politicians may try to change the environment and culture; Jesus changes the heart of a person. Politicians may, as it were, put a new coat on a person; Jesus puts a new person in the coat! Politicians come and go; Jesus not only forgives those who trust Him but stays with them for ever.

The need of every individual in all countries is not simply to earn more, or even to learn more, but to turn from our own way and trust Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. Even more important than which party the nation chooses, is whether we choose Jesus or our own way. The choice is between heaven and hell.



✝ marks the spot! Today, make the cross of Jesus the place where you ask God to forgive your past, be with you in the present, and then take you to be with Himself for all eternity.

As William Wiberforce, the MP responsible for pioneering the abolition of the slave trade in Britain, said:

“If there is no passionate love for Christ at the centre of everything, we will only jingle and jangle our way across the world, merely making a noise as we go.”

1. Koh Ewe, 'The Ultimate Election Year: All Elections Around the World in 2024', *Time*, 28 December 2023. Available at <https://time.com/6550920/world-elections-2024/> (accessed 2/2/2024).
Barrie Macdonald, 'Tuvalu', *Britannica*, updated 1 February 2023. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/place/Tuvalu> (accessed 2/2/2024).



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Written by Roger Carswell & Vinny Commons

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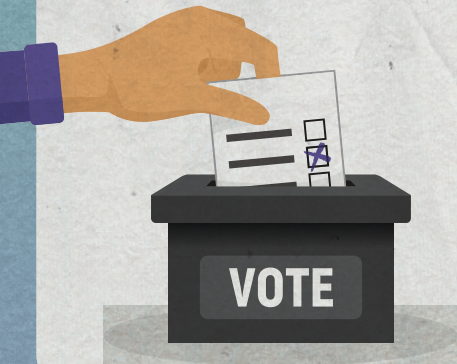
THE CROSS



THAT COUNTS

2024 WILL BE THE BIGGEST ELECTION YEAR IN HISTORY WITH MORE THAN 60 COUNTRIES – REPRESENTING HALF THE WORLD’S POPULATION – GOING TO THE POLLS. ✕

These elections range massively in size. The largest is in India, which has a population of 1.44 billion and whose election lasts several weeks; the smallest has already happened in the tiny country of Tuvalu which has less than 11 thousand people.¹



2024's elections will include many polls that are free and, we hope, trustworthy. Then there are the countries like North Korea where there isn't any real choice at all and elections are a mockery.

Yet even if our elections are free from fixing and fraud, it has become increasingly hard to trust political promises. The cynics ask: "How do you know when a politician is lying?" Answer: "Their lips are moving!"

Trust in politicians seems to be at an all-time low. But then as previous French President, Charles De Gaulle, quipped, "How can you govern a country which has 246 varieties of cheeses?" Pleasing everyone is never going to happen.

Whether we feel passionately about the upcoming election or not, the ✕ on the ballot paper is important: it affects our families, our freedoms, our finances and our future. The person we put our confidence in is crucial.

And yet we know that in time, there will be a sense of disappointment no matter who is elected.

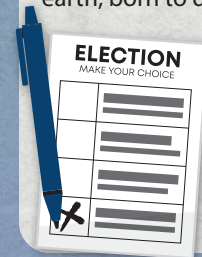
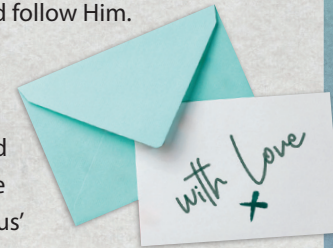
There is only one person we can have total confidence in. He has never disappointed any who have trusted Him. His good intentions have never failed. He is not a let-down. His manifesto is clear: He came to seek and to save those who are lost. They are not just words: Jesus, the Son of God, showed His sincerity by actually going to a cross to die for us.

2 + 2 = 5 ✕

As children at school, an ✕ meant we had got something wrong. The cross where Jesus died is a demonstration of that. He suffered and died, not for wrongs that He had done, but for our disobedience towards God. Sin is the breaking of all that God has commanded. We are guilty of failing to love God and others as we should.

It's easy to see the faults of others, especially our politicians. But our words, thoughts and actions reveal that something is rotten within all of us. Sin is serious, but on the cross, Jesus took our sin on Himself, paying for it. He died so that we could be forgiven by God if we will trust and follow Him.

An ✕ at the end of a text or card signifies love or a kiss. Jesus' cross clearly demonstrates God's love for us. While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. There is no greater love than the God we have turned our backs on sending His Son to earth; born to die, carrying our guilt.



And in election year, we are reminded that an ✕ signifies making a choice. Every one of us has to make