



### Exit Poll Shows Shift in Religious Vote Driven By ‘Kitchen Table’ Moral Issues

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Contact: Katie Barge, Faith in Public Life, 202-481-8147/ 202-243-8289

The results of a new exit poll commissioned by Faith in Public Life and conducted by Zogby International show that Iraq was the top moral issue influencing voters in the mid-term elections and that most Americans consider poverty and greed the most urgent moral problems in our culture. Voters who heard from faith groups urging people to vote on ‘kitchen table’ moral issues like peace in Iraq and poverty responded much more favorably than voters who heard from faith groups urging people to vote on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage and stem cell research.

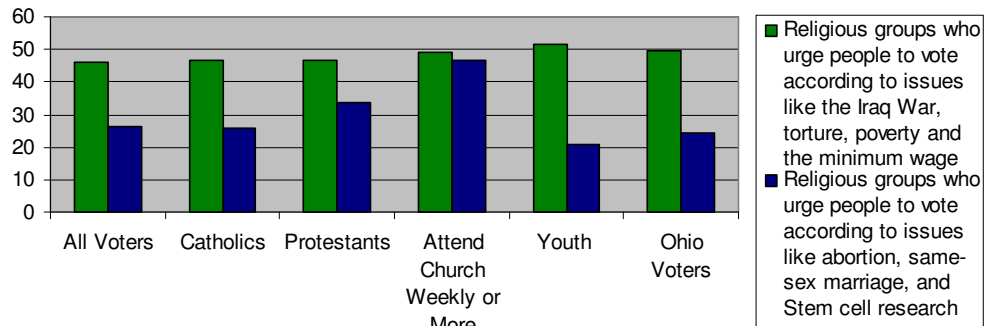
One of the most important trends in last week’s midterm elections was the narrowing of the ‘God Gap’ between Democrats and Republicans. According to National Election Pool exit polls, Democratic candidates posted substantial national gains since 2004 among Catholics (8-point gain from the 2004 presidential race and 6-point gain from the 2004 congressional races) and white evangelicals (7-point gain from the 2004 presidential race and 4-point gain from the 2004 congressional races), and narrowed the gap to 12 points (from 22 points in the 2004 presidential race and 18 points in the 2004 congressional races) among those who attend religious services once a week a more.

Given the steady turnout of religious voters, what might explain the narrowing ‘God Gap’?

**Voters who heard from faith groups urging people to vote on ‘kitchen table’ moral issues like peace in Iraq and poverty responded much more favorably than voters who heard from faith groups urging people to vote on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage and stem cell research.**

Faith groups urging people to vote according to ‘kitchen table’ moral issues had a 20-point higher national favorability rating (45.9 v. 26.4) than religious groups urging people to vote according to abortion and same-sex marriage.

Who responded favorably to religious groups...



- The favorability gap was also 20 points among Catholics (46.4 v. 25.9), 13 points among Protestants (46.8 v. 33.7), and 30 points among voters ages 18-29 (51.7 v. 20.9).
- Even among those who attend religious services once a week or more, religious groups urging people to consider ‘kitchen table’ moral issues had a higher national favorability rating (49 v. 46.6).
- In Ohio, an epicenter of faith organizing, religious groups urging people to vote according to ‘kitchen table’ moral issues had a 25-point higher favorability rating than those urging people to vote according to the wedge issues (49.8 v. 24.2).

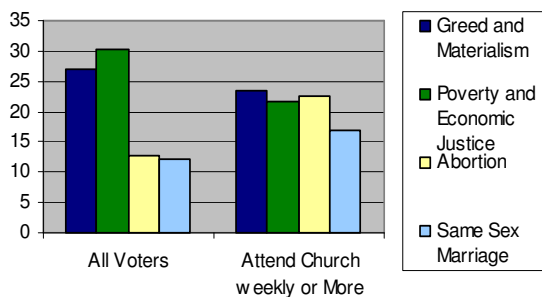
**Iraq was the top moral issue influencing voters and most Americans consider poverty and greed the most urgent moral problems in our culture.**

Iraq was considered the “moral issue that most influenced your vote” by 45.8% of voters (up 4 points from 41.9 in 2004), almost 6 times as many voters as abortion (7.9%) and almost 5 times as many as same-sex marriage (9.4%).

- 47.3% of Catholics named Iraq as the most important moral issue (up 6 points from 41.6 in 2004), almost 5 times as many Catholics that named abortion (9.8%) and more than 6 times as many that named same-sex marriage (7.2%). Among Protestants, 42.3% named Iraq as the most important moral issue (up 3 points from 39.4 in 2004), almost 5 times as many Protestants that named abortion (8.8%) and almost 4 times as many as named same-sex marriage (11.7%)
- For those who attend religious services once a week or more, Iraq was a more important moral issue (36.8, up 7 points from 29.6 in 2004) than abortion and same-sex marriage combined (28.2).

Abortion declined as the “moral issue that most affected your vote” from 2004 among all voters (down 5 points from 13.3 to 7.9), Catholics (down 8 points from 17.9 to 9.8), Protestants (down 5 points from 14.1 to 8.8) and weekly or more religious service attendees (down 10 points from 24.7 to 14.4). Same-sex marriage remained about the same.

**What is the most urgent moral crisis in American culture?**



More than twice as many voters see poverty/economic justice and greed/materialism and as the most urgent moral crises in American culture as those who see abortion and same-sex marriage as the most urgent moral crises (57.5 combined v. 24.9 combined).

- Greed/materialism and poverty/economic justice outweighed abortion and same-sex marriage among Catholics (59.5 v. 25.2), Protestants (50.9 v. 30.8), and those who attend religious services once or more weekly (45.1 v. 39.3).
- The difference was even greater among young voters: 62 v. 23.4.

These statistics shed important light on why the ‘God Gap’ narrowed while religious voter turnout remained steady. Religious voters value ‘kitchen table’ moral issues, and they voted their values on November 7.

Methodology -- Nationwide

Zogby International conducted interviews of 16,477 voters interactively (4,186 were Roman Catholic). Panelists who have agreed to participate in Zogby polls online were invited to participate in the survey. The online poll ran from 11/7/06 through 11/10/06. The margin of error is +/- 0.8 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. Slight weights were added to region, party, age, race, religion, and gender to more accurately reflect the population.

Methodology -- Ohio

Zogby International conducted interviews of 882 voters interactively. Panelists who have agreed to participate in Zogby polls online were invited to participate in the survey. The online poll ran from 11/7/06 through 11/10/06. The margin of error is +/- 3.4 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. Slight weights were added to party, age, race, and gender to more accurately reflect the population.

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