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Engage!

I've become a geek with regard to the American election this year. I can hardly tear my ears away from the latest round of revelations about Donald Trump or the political machinations of Hilary Clinton. I hang on the words of Nate Silver, the statistician who makes a living from predicting US elections.

Despite the feeling that this is an election of particular importance, the amount of voting age adults who cast their ballot is likely to stay somewhere around 50 or 55%, which is typical of US elections. This attitude to democracy is not unusual. In the Brexit referendum, which represented such an important moment for the UK, only 65% of voting age adults took part.

It often feels as if our Western societies are becoming less engaged in the things that effect all of us. Whether in the field of politics or in science, faith or creativity, we often leave these things to a few, vocal people, who set the agenda for the rest of us.

For Christians, the Bible points to a far more 'engaged' approach. We seem to be formed in a way that encourages relationships and engagement with the world around us, particularly with other people in community, as well as with God. To disengage from any of these things seems to squash our humanity, in a way. The biblical model seems to be to stay aware of what's going on in the world and to act upon it.

When our God – who is relational in nature – formed humanity He created us in His image so that we bear a resemblance to Him, like children to a parent. When we engage healthily with the world around us, when we pray for people in authority, when we vote and when we campaign we display the image of God in us.