
ADDENDUM: THINKING BIBLICALLY ABOUT THE 2024 ELECTION

In the US, the 5 main categories of political persuasion could be described here, from ‘left’ to ‘right.’ These categories are not rigid, and each may bleed into the categories next to it. And, of course, no politician is likely to fall entirely into a single category, and their views may shift over time.

<u>DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST</u>	<u>PROGRESSIVE</u>	<u>LIBERAL</u>	<u>LIBERTARIAN</u>	<u>CONSERVATIVE</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic democracy • Public ownership of key industries • Universal social programs • Economic equality and progressive taxation • Regulation of capitalism • Strong labor rights and unions • Social justice and civil rights • Environmental sustainability • Public investment in infrastructure and welfare • Universal basic income or guaranteed jobs • Democratic governance and political reform • Foreign policy based on peace and human rights • Access to affordable housing • Free and fair trade with labor protections • Anti-corporate power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic justice and wealth redistribution • Universal healthcare • Climate action and environmental justice • Racial and social justice • Workers' rights • Universal education and student debt relief • Affordable housing and homelessness • LGBTQ+ rights and gender equality • Campaign finance reform • Anti-corporate stance and corporate accountability • Democratic reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government as a tool for social good • Economic equality and social safety nets • Civil rights and social justice • Environmental protection • Universal healthcare • Support for public education • Reproductive rights • Gun control • Progressive social change • Multilateralism and diplomacy in foreign policy • Separation of church and state • Criminal justice reform • Immigration reform • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited government • Free markets and economic liberties • Individual liberty and personal responsibility • Non-interventionism in foreign policy • Civil liberties and privacy, including prochoice, and LGBTQ+ rights • Decriminalization of victimless crimes, such as drugs, prostitution • Gun rights • Fiscal conservatism • Support for decentralization • Separation of church and state • Opposition to government welfare programs • Immigration freedom • Opposition to corporate welfare and cronyism • Healthcare freedom • Education choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited government • Free market economy • Fiscal responsibility • Traditional social values • Strong national defense • Law and order • Constitutionalism • Skepticism of government welfare • Religious freedom • Immigration control

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST

1. Economic democracy

Democratic socialists believe that democracy should extend beyond politics into the economy. This means that workers should have more control over their workplaces, and decisions about production and investment should reflect the interests of the community, not just private profit. They support policies that empower workers, such as worker cooperatives, unions, and employee ownership of businesses.

2. Public ownership of key industries

While not advocating for the government to take over the entire economy, democratic socialists often call for public or cooperative ownership of key sectors like healthcare, education, utilities (such as energy or water), and transportation. They believe these services should be run for public good rather than for profit, ensuring universal access and affordability.

3. Universal social programs

One of the most prominent positions of democratic socialism is the advocacy for universal social programs that provide basic needs for all citizens. This includes:

- Universal healthcare (such as a single-payer system or Medicare for All)
- Tuition-free public education, including college and vocational training
- Affordable housing initiatives and public housing programs
- Universal childcare and paid family leave

Democratic socialists see these programs as essential to ensuring that everyone has access to the basic necessities of life, reducing inequality, and promoting equal opportunities.

4. Economic equality and progressive taxation

Democratic socialists focus on reducing income and wealth inequality. They support progressive taxation where the wealthy pay a higher percentage of their income in taxes to fund social services. This may also include higher taxes on corporations, capital gains, and wealth. They advocate for redistributive policies that provide a more equitable distribution of resources, aiming to reduce the gap between the rich and poor.

5. Regulation of capitalism

Democratic socialists do not seek to completely abolish capitalism but argue for stronger regulations on corporations and the market to prevent exploitation, monopolies, and environmental destruction. They believe in regulating large corporations to protect workers, consumers, and the environment. For example:

- Stronger labor rights and higher minimum wages
- Environmental regulations to combat climate change (e.g., Green New Deal policies)
- Corporate accountability measures to limit corporate power and influence in politics

6. Strong labor rights and unions

Democratic socialists are staunch advocates for the labor movement. They support policies that strengthen labor unions, promote collective bargaining, and ensure fair wages and working conditions. They believe that workers should have a larger share of economic power, and that unions are essential in negotiating better pay, benefits, and job security for workers.

7. Social justice and civil rights

Democratic socialists support equality and social justice across race, gender, and sexual orientation. They believe that society should work to eliminate systemic inequalities and discrimination in areas such as:

- Racial justice, including reforms to policing, criminal justice, and efforts to address economic disparities among marginalized racial and ethnic groups
- Gender equality, including support for reproductive rights, equal pay, and fighting against workplace harassment
- LGBTQ+ rights, ensuring protections against discrimination and support for equality in healthcare, employment, and other areas

Social justice, for democratic socialists, means restructuring society to remove systemic barriers that perpetuate inequality.

8. Environmental sustainability

Democratic socialists often emphasize environmental protection and sustainable development. They advocate for government-led initiatives to address climate change, such as transitioning to renewable energy, reducing carbon emissions, and creating "green jobs." They support comprehensive climate policies like the Green New Deal, which links economic and environmental reform by investing in sustainable infrastructure while creating jobs.

9. Public investment in infrastructure and welfare

Democratic socialists argue for robust public investment in infrastructure, public transportation, affordable housing, and social welfare. They believe that large-scale government investment is necessary to ensure that all citizens have access to services that improve their quality of life. These investments are often seen as a way to reduce inequality and create jobs, while modernizing society's infrastructure.

10. Universal basic income or guaranteed jobs

Some democratic socialists support either a universal basic income (UBI), where all citizens receive a regular financial stipend, or a guaranteed jobs program, ensuring that everyone who wants a job has access to one through government employment. Both policies aim to eliminate poverty and provide financial security to all individuals, regardless of market conditions.

11. Democratic governance and political reform

Democratic socialists support reforms to make democracy more inclusive and accountable. This includes:

- Campaign finance reform to reduce the influence of money in politics and limit corporate contributions to political campaigns
- Expanding voting rights through measures like automatic voter registration, making Election Day a national holiday, and opposing voter suppression efforts
- Electoral reforms such as ranked-choice voting or proportional representation, which they believe would create a more fair and democratic political system

12. Foreign policy based on peace and human rights

Democratic socialists often advocate for a foreign policy that prioritizes diplomacy, peace, and human rights. They typically oppose military interventions and imperialism, advocating for cutting military spending and redirecting those resources toward domestic welfare programs. They support international cooperation on issues like climate change and human rights.

13. Access to affordable housing

Democratic socialists often push for government intervention to address housing shortages and rising costs. They advocate for rent control, public housing, and policies that ensure housing is treated as a human right rather than a commodity. They believe that the housing market should serve people's needs, not speculative profit.

14. Free and fair trade with labor protections

While not entirely opposed to trade, democratic socialists support fair trade policies that protect workers' rights both domestically and internationally. They argue that trade agreements should include labor and environmental protections to ensure that they benefit workers and communities, not just corporations.

15. Anti-corporate power

Democratic socialists often oppose the concentration of corporate power and influence in government. They advocate for breaking up monopolies and reducing the influence of corporate lobbyists in politics, promoting policies that democratize the economy and reduce corporate control over key sectors of society.

PROGRESSIVE

1. Economic justice and wealth redistribution

- **Support for Higher Taxes on the Wealthy:** Progressives advocate for higher taxes on the wealthiest individuals and corporations to reduce income inequality and fund social programs.
- **Universal Basic Income (UBI) or Living Wage:** Many progressives support raising the minimum wage to a living wage (often advocating for a national minimum wage of \$15/hour or more) and, in some cases, exploring policies like universal basic income to ensure that all citizens have a minimum level of financial security.
- **Wealth Tax:** Some progressives, like Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sen. Bernie Sanders, propose wealth taxes on the ultra-rich to reduce economic inequality and fund public services.

2. Universal healthcare

- **Medicare for All:** A key progressive position is the push for single-payer, universal healthcare, often referred to as Medicare for All. This policy would eliminate private health insurance in favor of a government-run system that guarantees healthcare coverage for all citizens.
- **Expanding Public Health Services:** Progressives support expanding access to affordable healthcare, including prescription drugs, mental health services, and reproductive healthcare, often advocating for a significant reduction in healthcare costs.

3. Climate action and environmental justice

- **Green New Deal:** Progressives advocate for bold action to address climate change through policies like the Green New Deal, which aims to transition the U.S. to 100% renewable energy and create millions of green jobs in the process. This also includes policies to reduce carbon emissions, invest in clean energy infrastructure, and promote environmental sustainability.
- **Environmental Justice:** Progressives emphasize that climate change disproportionately impacts marginalized communities, advocating for policies that address the environmental inequalities faced by low-income and minority communities.

4. Racial and social justice

- **Criminal Justice Reform:** Progressives often push for comprehensive reforms to the criminal justice system, including ending mass incarceration, abolishing private prisons, and reforming policing through measures like defunding the police and investing in community-based services.
- **Racial Equity:** Progressives advocate for policies to address systemic racism, such as reparations for descendants of enslaved people, affirmative action, and targeted investments in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.
- **Immigration Reform:** Progressive immigration policies often include abolishing ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement), offering a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, especially DACA recipients (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), and improving refugee and asylum policies.

5. Workers' rights

- **Strengthening Labor Unions:** Progressives support the rights of workers to organize into labor unions and advocate for policies that protect collective bargaining. They often push for labor laws that protect workers from exploitation, ensure safe working conditions, and increase benefits like paid leave.
- **Paid Family and Medical Leave:** Many progressives advocate for a national paid family and medical leave program to ensure that all workers have access to time off to care for themselves or family members without losing income.

6. Universal education and student debt relief

- **Free Public College and University:** Progressives often propose policies that would make public colleges and universities tuition-free, ensuring that higher education is accessible to all, regardless of financial status.
- **Student Loan Forgiveness:** A key progressive policy is the cancellation of student debt, or at least large portions of it, recognizing the massive financial burden it places on many Americans, particularly younger generations.

7. Affordable housing and homelessness

- **Affordable Housing Initiatives:** Progressives push for policies to expand affordable housing through public investment in housing projects, rent control, and policies that prevent evictions. They often advocate for stronger tenant protections and measures to curb housing speculation by large real estate developers.
- **Addressing Homelessness:** Progressive policies include direct government intervention to reduce homelessness through housing-first approaches, providing shelters, and offering social services to help people find stable housing.

8. LGBTQ+ rights and gender equality

- **Comprehensive LGBTQ+ Protections:** Progressives support policies that protect the civil rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, including protections against discrimination in employment, housing, healthcare, and education. They also advocate for policies supporting transgender rights, including access to gender-affirming healthcare and legal protections.
- **Reproductive Rights:** Progressives are strong advocates for reproductive justice, including access to safe, legal abortions, contraception, and comprehensive sexual education. They support protecting and expanding the rights established under *Roe v. Wade* and oppose any efforts to restrict access to reproductive healthcare.

9. Campaign finance reform

- **Money Out of Politics:** Progressives call for reforms to reduce the influence of corporate money in politics, often advocating for the overturning of the *Citizens United* decision, which allowed unlimited corporate spending in elections. They push for publicly funded elections and greater transparency in campaign finance.
- **Lobbying Reform:** Progressives also seek to limit the power of corporate lobbying in shaping policy, especially in sectors like healthcare, defense, and energy, where corporate interests can disproportionately affect public policy.

10. Anti-corporate stance and corporate accountability

- **Breaking Up Monopolies:** Progressives often advocate for breaking up large corporations and monopolies, especially in sectors like Big Tech, Big Pharma, and Wall Street, to promote competition, consumer protections, and fair economic practices.
- **Corporate Regulation:** Progressives call for stronger regulations on corporations, especially around labor rights, environmental protections, and anti-trust laws. They argue for holding corporations accountable for unethical practices and limiting their influence over government policy.

11. Democratic reforms

- Voting Rights: Progressives advocate for expanding voting rights through measures such as automatic voter registration, expanding vote-by-mail, making Election Day a national holiday, and ending voter suppression tactics like gerrymandering and restrictive voter ID laws.
- Electoral Reform: Progressives often support electoral reforms like ranked-choice voting, abolishing the Electoral College, and ensuring that elections are more representative and accessible to all voters.

LIBERAL

1. Government as a tool for social good

Liberals believe in an active government that can and should play a key role in addressing social, economic, and environmental issues. They support government programs aimed at reducing poverty, providing healthcare, and improving education, arguing that government intervention can help ensure equal opportunity and protect the public welfare.

2. Economic equality and social safety nets

Liberals advocate for reducing income inequality and providing a robust social safety net. This includes support for progressive taxation (where wealthier individuals and corporations pay higher taxes), raising the minimum wage, and funding social programs like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, unemployment benefits, and food assistance programs.

3. Civil rights and social justice

Liberalism emphasizes the protection and expansion of civil rights and liberties for all, particularly marginalized groups. This includes strong support for racial and gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, and the protection of immigrants' rights. Liberals often favor affirmative action policies and advocate for police reform and criminal justice reform to address systemic inequalities.

4. Environmental protection

Liberals typically prioritize environmental conservation and climate action. They support government regulations to reduce pollution, limit carbon emissions, and protect natural resources. Liberals are also likely to advocate for renewable energy initiatives, sustainability practices, and participation in global efforts to combat climate change, such as the Paris Agreement.

5. Universal healthcare

One of the most prominent liberal positions is the belief that healthcare is a fundamental right. Many liberals advocate for expanding access to healthcare, whether through reforms to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicare for All, or other forms of universal healthcare systems. They argue that no one should go without medical care due to their financial situation.

6. Support for public education

Liberals strongly support public education and believe in investing in the educational system to promote equal opportunities for all children, regardless of background. They advocate for increased funding for public schools, making higher education more affordable, and reducing student loan debt. Many liberals also support free or reduced-cost public college and university programs.

7. Reproductive rights

Liberals typically support reproductive rights, including the right to access contraception and abortion services. They advocate for a woman's right to choose as a fundamental part of individual autonomy and oppose efforts to restrict or criminalize abortion.

8. Gun control

Liberals generally favor stronger gun control measures to reduce gun violence. This can include universal background checks, bans on assault-style weapons, and restrictions on high-capacity magazines. Liberals argue that these measures can help prevent mass shootings and gun-related deaths, while still respecting the Second Amendment.

9. Progressive social change

Liberals are more likely to embrace social changes and reforms aimed at achieving greater equality and inclusivity. This can include support for the #MeToo movement, marriage equality, transgender rights, and comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. They often view society as an evolving entity that should reflect modern values and adapt to new challenges.

10. Multilateralism and diplomacy in foreign policy

Liberals tend to favor diplomacy and international cooperation over unilateral military action in foreign policy. They support multilateral institutions like the United Nations and NATO and are more likely to advocate for the use of diplomacy, trade agreements, and foreign aid to achieve international stability and human rights goals, rather than relying on military intervention.

11. Separation of church and state

Liberals emphasize the importance of maintaining a clear separation between church and state. They advocate for secular policies in government and oppose religious influence on public policy, especially when it comes to issues like reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and education.

12. Criminal justice reform

Many liberals support reforms to address the inequities in the criminal justice system. This includes opposition to mandatory minimum sentencing, ending mass incarceration, advocating for rehabilitation over punishment, and eliminating the death penalty. They often emphasize reducing racial disparities in the justice system and addressing the root causes of crime, such as poverty and lack of opportunity.

13. Immigration reform

Liberals tend to support more lenient immigration policies, favoring comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. They are generally more supportive of refugee and asylum programs, as well as opposing policies like family separation or building a border wall.

14. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

DEI is an organizational framework aimed at promoting fair treatment and full participation of all people, especially those who have historically been underrepresented or subject to discrimination. It focuses on creating environments where diverse perspectives are valued, and everyone has equal opportunities to succeed.

LIBERTARIANISM

1. Limited government

Libertarians believe in drastically reducing the size and scope of government. They argue that most government functions, including welfare programs, regulations, and even many public services, should be minimized or eliminated. The government's role should be limited to protecting individual rights, including property rights and national defense.

2. Free markets and economic liberties

Libertarians strongly support free markets and oppose government intervention in the economy. They advocate for deregulation, lower taxes, and minimal government interference in business and trade. They believe that economic transactions should be governed by voluntary agreements between individuals, free from government mandates or subsidies.

3. Individual liberty and personal responsibility

Personal freedom is central to libertarian ideology. Libertarians believe that individuals should be free to make their own choices about their lives, so long as those choices do not infringe on the rights of others. This includes choices related to lifestyle, career, property, and body autonomy. With this freedom comes personal responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

4. Non-interventionism in foreign policy

Libertarians advocate for a non-interventionist foreign policy. They oppose U.S. involvement in foreign wars and military interventions unless directly related to national defense. Libertarians also tend to be skeptical of alliances and foreign aid, arguing that military entanglements and foreign commitments often infringe on individual liberty and waste taxpayer money.

5. Civil liberties and privacy

Protecting civil liberties is a core tenet of libertarianism. Libertarians oppose government surveillance programs, restrictions on free speech, and regulations that infringe on personal freedoms. They are strong defenders of the Bill of Rights and often advocate for reforms to end government overreach in areas like data collection, policing, and individual privacy.

6. Decriminalization of victimless crimes

Libertarians believe that the government should not criminalize activities that do not directly harm others, which they refer to as "victimless crimes." This includes support for decriminalizing or legalizing drugs, prostitution, gambling, and other personal behaviors. They argue that individuals should have the right to make choices about their own bodies and lives, even if those choices are risky or controversial.

7. Gun rights

Libertarians are strong advocates for gun rights, seeing the right to bear arms as essential to personal freedom and self-defense. They oppose most forms of gun control, arguing that individuals should be free to own and carry firearms without significant government restrictions.

8. Fiscal conservatism

Libertarians advocate for fiscal conservatism, including balanced budgets and a reduction in government spending. They oppose most forms of government welfare and social programs, believing that individuals and private charities should be responsible for helping those in need. They also oppose government debt and inflationary monetary policies, supporting instead a sound money system (often favoring hard currency or decentralized options like cryptocurrency).

9. Support for decentralization

Libertarians often support decentralization of government power, believing that local governments are more accountable and responsive to citizens than the federal government. They favor states' rights and the ability for local communities to govern themselves, as long as they do not violate individual liberties.

10. Separation of church and state

Libertarians believe in a strong separation between church and state. They oppose government involvement in religious matters and favor a secular government that neither promotes nor restricts religious practices. They believe individuals should be free to practice their religion or not practice at all, without government interference.

11. Opposition to government welfare programs

Libertarians are critical of government welfare programs, viewing them as inefficient and paternalistic. They believe that private charity, voluntary organizations, and free-market solutions are better suited to provide for those in need. They also argue that welfare programs can create dependency on the government and infringe on personal responsibility.

12. Immigration freedom

Many libertarians advocate for more open immigration policies, supporting the free movement of people across borders. They argue that immigration restrictions infringe on individual rights and harm the economy by limiting the labor market and economic growth. However, some libertarians believe that open borders should be contingent on the elimination of the welfare state, to prevent immigrants from relying on government assistance.

13. Opposition to corporate welfare and cronyism

Libertarians are critical of corporate welfare, subsidies, and government favoritism toward specific industries or businesses. They believe in a level playing field where businesses compete in a free market without government interference or special advantages. They argue that crony capitalism leads to corruption and inefficiency.

14. Healthcare freedom

Libertarians oppose government-controlled or socialized healthcare systems, believing that individuals should have the freedom to choose their own healthcare providers and insurance options. They argue that government intervention in healthcare leads to higher costs, inefficiency, and reduced innovation. Instead, they advocate for free-market healthcare solutions that allow competition and personal choice.

15. Education choice

Libertarians often support school choice and oppose government-run public education monopolies. They favor policies that allow parents to choose the educational options best suited for their children, including private schools, charter schools, homeschooling, or vouchers. They believe that competition in education would lead to better outcomes and innovation.

CONSERVATIVE

1. Limited government

Conservatives traditionally advocate for a smaller federal government with less regulation and more power given to state and local governments. They argue that the government should play a minimal role in the economy and individual lives, with an emphasis on personal responsibility and self-reliance.

2. Free market economy

Economic conservatism supports capitalism, free enterprise, and market-driven economies. Conservatives often favor low taxes, reduced government spending, and deregulation to encourage entrepreneurship and economic growth. They believe that the private sector is more efficient than government intervention in creating jobs and fostering innovation.

3. Fiscal responsibility

Conservatives prioritize balanced budgets, reduced national debt, and opposition to deficit spending. They advocate for lowering government spending on social programs and are skeptical of large-scale welfare programs, arguing they can create dependency on the government.

4. Traditional social values

Social conservatism is centered around the protection and promotion of traditional family structures, religious values, and cultural norms. This often includes opposition to abortion, support for heterosexual marriage, and a general resistance to rapid social changes, such as movements for LGBTQ+ rights.

5. Strong national defense

Conservatives typically support a strong military and robust national defense policies. They believe in maintaining a well-funded military to ensure national security and are often more willing to engage in assertive foreign policy, including military interventions when deemed necessary to protect U.S. interests.

6. Law and order

Conservatives emphasize law and order, supporting strong law enforcement and judicial systems. They tend to favor stricter sentencing policies for crime, including support for the death penalty and opposition to lenient criminal justice reforms. They argue that a well-ordered society requires the enforcement of laws and that crime must be met with firm punishment.

7. Constitutionalism

Many conservatives advocate for a strict interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, adhering closely to the original intent of the Founding Fathers. This includes a defense of the Second Amendment (the right to bear arms), limited use of judicial activism, and skepticism toward expansive readings of federal powers.

8. Skepticism of government welfare

Conservatives often criticize expansive government welfare programs, arguing they can discourage personal responsibility and hard work. They support welfare reforms that encourage work requirements and limit long-term reliance on government assistance.

9. Religious freedom

Many conservatives place a strong emphasis on religious freedom and the protection of religious expression in public life. They often oppose policies that they perceive as infringing on the ability of individuals or organizations to practice their faith, especially in matters like healthcare mandates that conflict with religious beliefs.

10. Immigration Control

Conservatives typically advocate for stricter immigration policies. This can include opposition to illegal immigration, support for building stronger borders, and favoring merit-based legal immigration systems over family-based systems.