

Lord David Alton

"The Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, once said "Do not ask where was *God* at Auschwitz, ask where was *man*." He was reminding us that through our own actions, or lack of them, we determine the shape of the society in which we live. Privileged, as we are, to live in a democracy, we certainly can't blame God for unjust laws and misplaced political priorities. When we cast our votes we decide on who will be our MPs, who will govern our country. Will we elect MPs who will uphold the sanctity and dignity of human life? Will they speak out against oppression and unjust laws? Will they devote themselves to public service? Will they vote to protect minorities, to safeguard the vulnerable, to take pressure of families and communities, to protect the rich diversity of British life, such as the provision of Church schools and the right of men and women of all faiths to follow their beliefs? We have a duty to find out where candidates and parties stand and then to vote accordingly.

Reflecting on the nature of Judaeo-Christian beliefs, Archbishop Desmond Tutu put it well in insisting that "when people tell me that the Bible has nothing to do with politics; I ask them which Bible are you talking about?"

The Bible's starting point is the Book of Genesis. It declares that every person is made in *the image of God*, and therefore of inestimable worth. This is regardless of colour, creed, ability, class, orientation or gender. At every stage of life, *from the womb to the tomb*, we must uphold the sanctity and dignity of human life. General Elections give us the chance to support candidates who are willing to take a stand on issues such as abortion, embryo experimentation, human cloning and euthanasia and who speak up for policies that champion the sick, the vulnerable, the weak and the poor. Through our votes we can put our beliefs into action. "

- David Alton (Prof.Lord Alton of Liverpool) has been an Independent Crossbench Peer for the past 12 years and for the previous 18 years served in the House of Commons.