

LIGHT

IN THE DARKNESS

“And they sent to him some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his talk. 14 And they came and said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?” 15 But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, “Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” 16 And they brought one. And he said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” They said to him, “Caesar's.” 17 Jesus said to them, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.” And they marveled at him.” Mark 12:13-17

BIG IDEA

Politics are greatly important and we should all be involved and talking about it. Politics matters and it shapes us profoundly. But it is not ultimate. The Kingdom of Jesus Christ will not be ushered in through politics. Politics is not our greatest problem, our sin is our greatest challenge.

The way we vote is shaped by our family of influence, experiences, media, and the Bible.

ICE BREAKER

“And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.” 1 Samuel 8:7

Jesus is calling to mind that the people wanted worldly power and God gave them what they wanted. You have rejected God. Now we have a dog fight of who will control the majority. We are reaping what was sown centuries ago from rejecting our God.

We should not put our hope in politics and utopian values but in the Living God. Jesus has the last word.

Politics and our vote gives us a false sense of control, safety, justice, cleverness, righteousness. We are saved by grace through faith and nothing else.

1. How should we think about government and politics as a christian?

NEXT STEP:

“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” Jeremiah 29:7

Render to God our future hope and render to Caesar the dignity and common good of those around me.

“then I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. 5 Your threshing shall last to the time of the grape harvest, and the grape harvest shall last to the time for sowing. And you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land securely. 6 I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid. And I will remove harmful beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land.” Leviticus 26:4-6

Wherever you go give people a taste of this. Give them a taste of flourishing. Seek the common good of the city you are in and you too will benefit. Jesus must be the source and sustainer of it all.

NOTES AND QUOTES

Three ideas to contribute to living out the common good of daily life and politics.

1. Life

“And the Lord said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.” Genesis 4:10

2. Family

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” Exodus 20:12

3. Vocation

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.” Philippians 2:14-15

1. Pray for our political leaders and the elections.
2. Pray for the unity of our country.
3. Pray for the unity of our church.

“Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. 13 But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 14 And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” Isaiah 8:12-14

Take the love given to you and give it to each other.