



FOILING ELECTION INFECTION

study questions

Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.



INTRODUCTION

Politics isn't an emotionally neutral topic. It has the power to divide us instead of bring us together. Politics can so color the way we see the world that we're left wondering if someone could hold political beliefs different from our own and still follow Jesus.

The problem is that politics can divide Christ's body, the church, and that's one thing Jesus said must never happen. When it does, the question everyone else can rightly ask is: So where is your God now? Diversity is a reality because, as Christians believe, our Creator loves variety.

There is no doubt that elections matter – they have sweeping consequences for our country and society. However the important thing to realize in a year like 2016 is what (or better who) matters most. How would our outlooks change if we filtered our politics through our faith rather than filtering our faith through our politics? That just might change the whole game.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do politics play a role in your family's mealtime conversations during Thanksgiving and Christmas? If so, do you tend to join the debate or withdraw? Why do you respond the way you do?
2. **Read Romans 13:1-7 together.**
 - a. Knowing what you know about life for Christians back then, how do you think you would respond to such words.
 - b. Do you think v. 2 is always the case? What about v. 3-4: Is that always the way it is for Christians around the world?
 - c. What does "matter of conscience" mean in v. 5?
 - d. Paul just dives in to talk of government & politics as such. What, if anything, does all this have to do with the teaching of chapter 12?
 - e. Think of a political belief you oppose so strongly that you can't imagine how someone else could hold it. What questions would you ask a person who holds that belief? What value might there be in asking questions?
3. Now read Romans 13:8-10 together.
 - a. In the Greek "owe," in v. 7, is the same word for owing debt in v. 8. What is the connection?
 - b. What does "summed up" mean in v. 10? Is that our only command? What does it say about what happens when we live this command?
 - c. During the message, Dwain said, "Jesus followers should be the most confident, curious, composed, compassionate people in the room." How do you think that would look in our conversations this political year?
4. What is one practical step you can take this week to put people first and your politics second? How can your group pray for you and help you follow through?

MOVING FORWARD

Republican, Democrat, left or right, we're all precious in his sight. This political season is an opportunity for us to showcase our political diversity in a way that honors the God who made us so diverse. If we get this right, we'll learn something, and God will use his good in us to overcome evil in our time (Romans 12:21).

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"...love your neighbor as yourself" ... is the fulfillment of the law." Romans 13:9-10