

Christianity and Politics

Sticky Series

Discussion Questions

- **Why is politics considered a sticky subject in general?**
 - Why is it even a stickier subject “in church”?
 - How can the church abuse its role in the name of politics?
 - How can a church neglect its role in the name of politics?

- **Yancey introduced the term polis. What does it mean?** (Hint: It’s a sphere of a shared civic life by a community under a specific rule)
 - How are we members of different polises*? (e.g., local, state, etc.)
 - If the political is anything which flows from a polis that engages civic life for the common good, what then would be considered political?
 - How might this challenge our definition of politics?
 - Why is politics a much bigger conversation than what happens in Washington, D.C.? How is the PTA, Gulf Coast fish conservationists, or the local library board also political?

- **Read Mk. 12:29-31 and Mt. 7:12.**
 - What is the greatest commandment as it relates our dealings with others?
 - How does the Matthew passage reaffirm the Mark passage?
 - Restate Jesus’ words in these two passages in your own words.
 - How does Jesus’ commandment tutor the way we engage the civic/political life of the community?
 - How might political actions go against Jesus’ words in these two texts?

- **Read Eph. 1:20-23 and Phil. 2:9-11 and look for political language.**
 - Name any political terms you found?
 - Why would the Bible use political terms to describe the faith and the kingdom of God?

- **How are we citizens of two different “kingdoms”?**
 - When do we decide to follow our ultimate kingdom (the kingdom of God) and our ultimate king, Jesus, over and above our allegiances to earthly citizenships (e.g., American, Texan)?
 - Why is it that some have a hard time distinguishing between the two?

- Yancey said that the church isn't so much apolitical as alternatively political. How is the kingdom of God an alternate political reality?
- Yancey said:

That's the alternative politic of the church. We don't have services telling people who to vote for or which party to join. We gather as a church body in worship to be re-centered on who we are and whose we are in order that Jesus might tutor us once again to be better contributors in the other (and lesser) polises we're a part of. The gospel compels us to be better American citizens because our heavenly citizenship calls us to work for the common good in way that loves our neighbor. Jesus sends us out to be better citizens of earthly kingdoms because we're committed to the values of his eternal kingdom.

We should serve our civic community well by aiming for the common good of all Americans with policies and practices that treat others as we would want to be treated, and loved as we would want to be loved - with fairness, equity, compassion, protection, flourishing, and so forth - those values mirror the kingdom of God.

- What is Yancey saying here?
- Why should the political involvement a follower of Jesus be good for the common good of any nation, regardless of their diversity? (Hint: think Great Commandment, again)
- How does coming together in small group, or services, etc. (as CCCC) remind us that we are citizens of an alternative polis with a different king?
- How does this topic intersect our Spiritual Growth Grid's gospel identity of being a citizen?
- **Why do we need to watch out if politics has become an idol in our life? How would we know this is happening?**
- **How can we as a small group remind and encourage each other to be, first and foremost, citizens of the kingdom of God when it comes to our political involvements?**

*Yancey mentioned that the plural of polis is actually poleis, but the incorrect “polises” is easier to understand.