

NAVIGATING FAITH & GOVERNMENT

EPISODE 2:

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, “How did we do?” Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

 **PRAYER** - Begin with prayer, inviting Jesus into the conversation.

Follow Up on Last Episode's Assignment

- What stood out to you as you examined where you place your hope when political or cultural tensions arise?
- Did reading the Scriptures on authority and government challenge or strengthen your perspective? How so?
- Were you able to pray intentionally for leaders in the family, church, and civil government spheres? What did you learn
- How might God be shaping your thinking about government and your role as a follower of Jesus?

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God's Word by asking, “What does Jesus want us to know?” If you haven't already, watch this week's video: “*Navigating Faith & Government: A Tale of Two Cities*.” Then use the summary, questions, and Scriptures below to draw out the main truths together.

 **WATCH: Episode 2: A Tale of Two Cities**

Episode Summary

Scripture presents two competing cities: Babylon, the City of Man, and heavenly Jerusalem, the City of God. Followers of Jesus live in both realities at once, participating in earthly nations while belonging ultimately to God's kingdom. Human governments and political movements often promise a better world, but only Christ can provide salvation and security. Remembering our heavenly citizenship helps us engage culture with hope, wisdom, and an eternal perspective.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you're studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward**. For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This six-part series helps believers navigate conversations about faith and government with biblical wisdom, humility, and hope. Each episode explores God's design for government, our identity as citizens of heaven, and our calling to live faithfully in an increasingly divided culture. The goal is not to win political arguments, but to point people to Jesus, engage others with grace, and pass on a legacy of faith to the next generation.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What struck you most about the contrast between Babylon and heavenly Jerusalem in this episode?
2. Why do you think people are so drawn to leaders or movements that promise security, prosperity, or national renewal?
3. What does it practically mean to live as a citizen of heaven while participating in an earthly nation?
4. Have you ever seen political disagreements create distance or division within a family? What can followers of Jesus do differently?
5. How does keeping the New Jerusalem in view change the way you think about current events and cultural conflicts?

Our Savior will come from heaven, and not on Air Force One.

Episode Notes

1. Two cities, two citizenships

- Babylon is the City of Man, built for human glory apart from God
 - Jerusalem is the City of God, built for God's glory
 - Followers of Jesus live in both cities while on earth
 - Our earthly residence and heavenly citizenship shape how we live
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2. The spirit of Babylon

- Babylon seeks to re-create paradise without God
 - Human systems too often promise what only God can provide
 - Every generation faces the temptation to trust in earthly solutions
 - The City of Man rises and falls throughout history
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3. The spirit of Antichrist

- False saviors offer what only Christ can provide
 - Political leaders and movements can become misplaced objects of hope
 - The real battle is spiritual, not merely political
 - Followers of Jesus must guard against putting ultimate trust in human power
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4. The heavenly Jerusalem

- The Church is the City of God within the City of Man
 - Christians are citizens of heaven before they are citizens of any nation
 - We are called to be salt and light in a dark world
 - Our ultimate destination is the New Jerusalem
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WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Philippians 3:20 – “**But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.**” Followers of Jesus belong first to God’s kingdom and look ultimately to Christ rather than earthly powers for their hope and security.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 12:22–23 – “**But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...**” Believers are already part of God’s heavenly city and share an identity that transcends earthly nations and political divisions.



Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, “What does Jesus want us to do?” Commit to practical steps for living out this week’s lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and move forward together in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Matthew 5:13–16
Ephesians 6:12
Revelation 21:1–4

THIS EPISODE’S ASSIGNMENT

This week, pay attention to the ways political and cultural issues influence your emotions, conversations, and relationships. Reflect on the signs of Babylon in your country and culture and in your prayer time remind yourself that your primary citizenship is in heaven.

Look for one opportunity to build a bridge with someone who sees the world differently than you do, choosing understanding, grace, and Christlike love over winning an argument.

If appropriate, reach out to someone with whom you have experienced political division and ask forgiveness for any un-Christlike words or actions on your part. Pray that God would help you become a peacemaker who builds bridges rather than walls.

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS



- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to reach next-gen loved ones?

SHARE WITH THE GROUP



Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and real-life stories. Close with prayer.

