



PART TWO: FAITH + POLITICS

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. How would our outlooks change if we filtered our politics through our faith rather than filtering our faith through our politics?

BIG IDEA: Put your faith before your politics.

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. During the message, Chris said, "No matter where you stand politically, you can find something in the Bible to support your stand." Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. 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?
4. During the message, Chris said, "Jesus followers should be the most confident, curious, composed, compassionate people in the room." How do you think a confident, curious, composed, and compassionate person would respond to people who disagree with him or her?
5. Talk about a time when you sacrificed influence with someone in order to make a point. Did you change that person's opinion?
6. What is one practical step you can take this week to put people first and your politics second? How can this group help you follow through?

GOING DEEPER

1. What do you think comes to most people's minds when they hear the word "Christian"? Why?
2. What are some things about our world that tempt you to view Christianity as fragile? Why do you think those things endanger the faith? How do you think those assumptions influence your relationship with Jesus?
3. During the message, Chris said, "Faithfulness shines brighter during times of uncertainty." Talk about a time when uncertainty made your faith shine brighter.
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Hebrews 11:37-38.*

They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

Hebrews 11:37-38

5. Does the idea of having the kind of faith that would make the world unworthy of you seem realistic or attainable? Why or why not?





6. In what area of your life are you successful at looking forward and being faithful? What are some practical ways you can apply your approach to that area of life to an area of life in which you're tempted to look backward and be fearful?
7. What is one thing you can do to fix your eyes on Jesus instead of safety, security, and comfort? How can this group support you?

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. We'll become a more generous and loving people. If we get it wrong, we'll be an average church.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Is your version of Christianity worth the price early Christians paid for it? The author of the book of Hebrews wrote, "*They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them.*" What would that kind of faith look like for you and me?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1–2