



Talking Points

The division in the church created by our current political climate intersects directly with the teachings of Jesus. In the final hours before his death, Jesus prayed that his followers would be united not in politics, but in purpose— that they would love each other as He had loved them, and that this sacrificial love would show the world the true face of God.

Start Talking

1. Why do you think politics is ultimately such a divisive subject matter? What is it about this particular human pursuit that sows discord like nothing else?
2. Have you ever found yourself trapped on the other side of somebody's political rant— a friend, parent, coworker, acquaintance? How did it make you feel?

Looking Back

1. How did you do when it came to the task of keeping immediate things from distracting you from ultimate things this past week?
2. Were you able to remove any obstacles to what Andy called, "your preferred future?" What did that process look like for you?
3. Did you take any steps to downsize toxic relationships? What were the results?



What About You?

1. What mental obstacles do you find yourself throwing up when it comes to unconditionally loving those with whom you disagree on political matters?
2. What internal lines do you use to justify derision of people on the other side of political issues? When are you tempted to dehumanize them?
3. Do you have regular, healthy interaction with people who think differently about political issues than you do?
4. Do you ever find yourself creating a version of faith that supports your politics, rather than evaluating your politics through the filter of faith?
5. Do you ever experience dissonance between your Christian beliefs and your party's platform and candidates? How do you respond?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: John 13: 34-35. John 17: 1, 11, 20-23. Matthew 16:18.

1. What does Jesus' prayer here reveal about his priorities?
2. Why do you think he takes the time to intentionally mention later believers in addition to his first generation of followers?
3. Jesus presents himself as the model of the love that should animate Christian communities, which forces us to confront the question: If Jesus is the model, then what should love look like?
4. Andy defined Jesus' version of unity here as unity of purpose rather than political unity. How is unity of purpose different than political unity?
5. Jesus came as a messiah/king to reverse the order of things. What do you think this looks like in the modern world? What are the implications for our personal politics?

Putting It All Together

1. How can you prioritize Jesus' ethic of unconditional love over partisan politics this week?
2. What would it look like to re-evaluate your politics through the filter of Jesus, rather than creating versions of faith that support your politics?
3. Where can you find opportunities to unconditionally love those who disagree with you on political matters this week?
4. How can you remind yourself to resist the temptation to dehumanize people on the other side of political issues?

