



Talking Points

The division in the church created by our current political climate intersects directly with the teachings of Jesus. And despite the fact that every person and political party seems to believe that Jesus would agree with their agenda, Jesus didn't come to Earth to take sides: He came to take over. This means that on some level, the Kingdom of God will always be at odds with the political factions and empires of this world. And in order to see where unity should end and diversity of political beliefs may begin, it's helpful to dive into words from the Apostle Paul.

Start Talking

1. Do you think it's possible for large, diverse groups of people to agree on important issues? Why or why not?
2. When do you find yourself most aware of the intense political division that dominates contemporary culture?

Looking Back

1. How did you do when it came to prioritizing Jesus' ethic of unconditional love over partisan politics this week?
2. In what ways have you begun to re-evaluate your politics through the filter of Jesus, rather than creating versions of faith that support your politics? What has changed?
3. Were you tempted to dehumanize people on the other side of political issues? How did you respond?

What About You?

1. Andy discussed the natural, inevitable diversity of beliefs about the best course of political action that results from humanity's wide range of different life experiences,



mentioning “Miles’ Law,” that, “where we stand depends upon where we sit.” In other words, how we see the world depends largely upon our very specific, personal experience of the world. What impact should this fact have on how we think of our own political opinions?

2. How should it affect the way we interact with other people?
3. How does it make you feel to consider the possibility that your political lens was shaped by a variety of factors over which you have little control?
4. Do you have regular, healthy interaction with people who think differently about political issues than you do?
5. Why do you think human beings are so threatened by the fact that our knowledge and opinions are contingent— meaning they’re shaped by where we were born, who raised us, and how we were educated?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: 1 Corinthians 9:19, 21. Galatians 6:2.

1. Paul talks here about “the law of Christ,” as something above and beyond Earthly legislation. What would it look like to refract our political beliefs through the law of Christ? What would be the political implications?
2. What does “the law of Christ” require of us when it comes to interacting with other people who don’t see the world the way we do? How can we, “become slaves” to their experience and expertise?
3. Based upon these passages written within the incredibly diverse world Paul occupied, how do you think Paul would treat, “the frontiers of his own ignorance?” What would it look like when he interacted with other people?
4. How would you describe Paul’s attitude towards the empire in which he lived? How does that compare to his loyalty to the kingdom of God?

Putting It All Together

1. What might change if Christians truly prioritized the kingdom of God over the temporary, flawed political empires we happen to live in?
2. How can you implement the law of Christ into your political thinking this week? Where might it cause some tension with your political tribe?
3. Andy argued that Christians should be unified around a radical concern for the well-being of every person, but may have diverse beliefs about how to go about achieving the best outcomes. Where can you begin to reorient your politics to focus on the well-being of other image bearers of God this week?
4. How can you keep in mind this week that our knowledge and opinions are shaped by forces outside of our control, and shouldn’t take precedent over Jesus’ clear command of unconditional love?

