

The Politics of the Cross

April 23, 2023 / Rev. Craig Swartz / [Mark 12:13-17](#) / Redeemer Church Riverview

We Worship the God of All Wisdom

[Psalm 104:24](#)

Welcome

Song of Praise “Hear the Call of the Kingdom”

Call to Worship [Psalm 104:1, 2; 24, 25](#)

Song of Praise “Immortal Invisible (God Only Wise)”

Confession of Faith [1 Corinthians 1:29, 30](#)

Song of Praise “We Will Dwell”

Prayer of Adoration

Greet One Another

Ministry Spotlight **Boyette Sports**

Prayer of Intercession

Giving of God’s Tithes and Our Offerings

Song of Preparation “The Church’s One Foundation”

Scripture Reading [Mark 12:13-17](#)

Sermon “The Politics of the Cross”

Prayer of Commitment

Song of Response “Be Thou My Vision (You are My Vision)”

Benediction

SERMON NOTES:

“As people seek out the social settings they prefer—as they choose the group that makes them feel the most comfortable—the nation grows more politically segregated—and the benefit that ought to come with having a variety of opinions is lost to the righteousness that is the special entitlement of homogeneous groups...Like-minded, homogeneous groups squelch dissent, grow more extreme in their thinking, and ignore evidence that their positions are wrong. As a result, we now live in a giant feedback loop, hearing our own thoughts about what’s right and wrong bounced back to us by the television shows we watch, the newspapers and books we read, the blogs we visit online, the sermons we hear, and the neighborhoods we live in.” **Bill Bishop**, “The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-minded America is Tearing us Apart”

[Mark 12:14a](#)

1st main point:

A RADICAL

[Isaiah 61:1-2](#)

“Judas the Galilean called his fellow countrymen cowards for being willing to pay tribute to the Romans and for putting up with mortal masters in the place of God.” **Josephus**

“The phrase ‘Kingdom of God’ does not refer to a place, called ‘heaven,’ where God’s people go after death. It refers to the rule of heaven, that is, of God, being brought to bear in the present world. Thy kingdom come, said Jesus, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus’ contemporaries knew that the creator God intended to bring justice and peace to his world here and now. The question was, how, when and through whom?” **N.T. Wright**

2nd main point:

A RADICAL

[Mark 12:14b-17](#)

“What Jesus is doing is a masterful example of refusing to say don’t pay the taxes which would mean revolt. On the other hand, He does not say just acquiesce to the system.” **N.T. Wright**

“Jesus’ approval of paying taxes to Rome was revolutionary. By this he shows us that the legitimacy of a government is not determined by whether it supports the worship of the one true God or even allows for it. By Jesus not requiring those that follow Him only to support states which support formal allegiance to the true God, as in the Old Testament Israel, Jesus unhitches following Him from any particular nation.” **Pastor**

3rd main point:

A RADICAL

[Matthew 8:20](#)

[Colossians 1:15-16](#)

“Barabbas was a guy burning the system down, he is killing people. But if you let Barabbas go, you can always catch him again. The most Barabbas will do is go out and round up another band of gorillas and start another riot... You can always stop Barabbas. But how do you stop Jesus? They nailed Him to a cross, then they buried Him. They rolled the stone over His grave, and they wiped their hands and they said, ‘There is one radical who will never disturb us again. Three days later Jesus Christ pulled off one of the greatest coups of all time. He got up out of the grave, the leader of a new creation who has overthrown the existing order and has established a new order that is not built on man. To put Barabbas to death ends his revolution; to put Jesus to death only launches it. To take away power from Barabbas ends his revolution. To take away power from Jesus only launches it. So, keep in mind my friend that will all your military and all your radicalism that all the systems of man have are doomed to destruction. Only God’s kingdom will prevail, and you will never be truly radical until you become part of that order. Then you can go out into the world that has enslaved the world with hunger, poverty, and racism and all those things that are the work of the devil. Go and proclaim liberty to the captives, give sight to the blind. Go into the world and tell all that are bound mentally, spiritually, and physically, that the real liberator has come.” **Tom Skinner**