



Parkway Fellowship

6 TRUTHS YOU CAN COUNT ON • ELECTIONS MATTER •

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2; JOHN 19:10-11; LUKE 20:22-25; MATTHEW 16:18 • 10/4/2020

MAIN POINT

We can vote in elections, trusting God to use our leaders, whoever they are, to accomplish His purposes.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Would you consider yourself politically active or passive?

How has social media changed the way people respond to politics? What are some positive ways social media has influenced people politically? What are some negative ways it has influenced people politically?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is it that Christians vote? Explain.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ JOHN 19:10-11B.

What contrasting worldviews are present in this exchange?

What are some different worldviews regarding elections and politics people hold today?

What should Christians believe to be true as they head to the voting booth (or mailbox)?

In this week's sermon, we learned that God can accomplish His will through any leader, even unbelieving ones. Pilate thought he was in charge and could make or break things for Jesus, but we see in Jesus' response that the only power Pilate truly had was given to him by God.

If Pilate only had the power God allowed him to have, then why should Christians vote? We learned in this week's sermon that when Christians don't vote, unchristian things come to pass. Why is this true?

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ LUKE 20:22-25.

What might've been behind the leaders' question (v. 22)? What trap did they try to set?

What's so insightful about Jesus' response?

Caesar's image is on coins. Let Caesar have coins. God's image is on people. Let people be devoted to God. This would include all people, for Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Certainly, people are more important to God than things, so Jesus placed devotion to God on a higher plane than devotion to Caesar without positioning Himself in opposition to either God or government (see Rom. 13).

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2.

How you think praying for political leaders might impact the way a person speaks and acts regarding political matters, including voting?

Why does it please God for His people to pray earnestly for those in authority?

We learned in this week's message that God wants us to support our leaders, not undermine them. Prayer helps us with that! Our prayers for those in authority takes our focus off who is in charge and puts it on God, who is working through all those He has placed in positions of authority.

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MATTHEW 16:18B.

How does these words from Jesus encourage you in the current political climate?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What would happen in our country if every Christ-follower did NOT vote? What if every Christ-follower did?

Why would God want you to pray for a leader you didn't vote for and doesn't seem to believe in Christ?

What did Jesus say about politics and power that rings true for you today?

PRAYER

Thank God for His Word that is the source of wisdom in all areas of life. Ask Him to help you not give in to fear but trust Him more. Ask Him to use your leaders, whoever they are, to accomplish His purposes.

COMMENTARY

| JOHN 19:10-11

In typical Jewish fashion, Jesus used from above to refer to God.

| LUKE 2:20-25

The religious leaders thought they had found the perfect way to trap Jesus, no matter how He answered. If He said it was lawful to pay the poll tax to Caesar, it would turn the Jewish people against Him. If He said it was not lawful, it would provide grounds for the Romans to arrest Him for treason. But Jesus did not fall into their trap. By asking for a denarius, the specific coin used to pay the poll tax, Jesus demonstrated that the religious leaders themselves found it necessary to cooperate with the ruling Roman government. Give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's was a proper recognition of the legitimate role of human government in God's plan (Rm 13:1-7). To God the things that are God's does not divide life into secular and sacred, which would imply that God is indifferent about some aspects of human existence. Rather, Jesus' statement demonstrates that all facets of life have reference to God, including the need to submit to governmental rule.

| 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

2:1 Paul didn't write 1 Timothy as an exhaustive treatise on church organization. Instead, he wrote to give Timothy confidence to face those who spread false doctrine and undercut the church's commission to evangelize. Therefore, Paul's first line of defense was prayer. In this verse, the apostle mentioned four different words for prayer. Petitions included requests individuals made of God. The term prayers was the most general word. Intercessions included prayers for other believers. The thanksgivings Paul mentioned probably included gratitude for God's blessings. The apostle may not have intended any sharp distinction among the four terms. The use of all four terms emphasizes the importance of prayer in overcoming the false teaching in Ephesus and in winning the lost to Christ. The subject of these prayers included everyone—indicating the breadth of Paul's concern.

2:2 Paul encouraged Timothy to pray for governmental authorities who could help provide an environment conducive to evangelism.

| MATTHEW 16:18B

So what did Jesus mean by “on this rock I will build my church”? Possibilities include Peter himself, his faith, his confession, Christ Himself, or a combination. We can acknowledge Peter had a primary place in the early church, appearing first in every list of the disciples and being the focus of the first half of the Book of Acts.

The word “forces” refers to the limited power of Hades, but the church's power in Christ is limitless. Jesus meant the forces of hell could not defeat or impede a faithful church that is focused on Him.