Central Reflection Guide

Childhood God, week 12: Politics

Choose questions that best fit your group:

1. The sermon mentions the complexity of being both a Christian and a citizen. How do you navigate this balance in your own life? How does your faith inform your politics? If you are willing, give specific examples.
2. Does God care about the United States and our collective dedication to the Christian faith as a nation? What are your thoughts?

READ: 2 Chronicles 7:14

3. This passage is often used as guidance to the United States. What is the author talking about in this passage? Is this something that applies to us as a nation? If so, in what ways? If not, who does it speak to?
4. The concept of a "Christian nation" was mentioned. What does this term mean to you, and do you think it's a desirable goal?
5. Discuss the sermon's assertion the gospel can flourish regardless of political leadership or person in power. Do you agree or disagree, and why? How do you reconcile this with the call to be politically active and advocate for justice in society?
6. Are you willing to evaluate your politics through the filter of your faith – rather than create a version of faith that supports your politics? Can you give examples where this applies to your life and voting?

Closing Exercise: (I would make this mandatory if I could)

Select either two political candidates (say, Trump and Biden) or one political issue (say abortion), and thoughtfully examine both perspectives. For each candidate or the chosen issue, offer both supporting and opposing viewpoints.

Identify and discuss the following:

- **Alignment with the Kingdom of God:** How do the beliefs, policies, or the core of the issue align with the values and principles often associated with the teachings of the Kingdom of God, such as justice, love, mercy, and stewardship?
- **Misalignment with the Kingdom of God:** In what ways do the candidates' platforms or characters, the issue's viewpoints, or their methods of addressing problems diverge from or contradict the principles and teachings of Jesus?
- **Analyze the approach/actions taken by the candidates or the proponents/opponents of the issue.** How does this approach reflect the manner in which Jesus taught us to engage with power, leadership, and advocacy? Consider whether the approach promotes peace, justice, and the well-being of the marginalized.

Additional Resources:

Schiess, Kaitlyn. “The Ballot and the Bible: How Scripture Has Been Used and Abused in American Politics and Where We Go from Here.” Baker Publishing Group.

Explainer Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9sBIcrblS4&t=279s

Stanley, Andy. “Not in It to Win It: Why Choosing Sides Sidelines The Church.” Zondervan Refective.

Moore, Russel. “Losing Our Religion: An Altar Call for Evangelical America.” Sentinel.

Alberta, Tim. “The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory.” Harper: An Imprint of HarperCollinsPubishers.