

Sermon Discussion Guide

Sacred Practices: Being the Church

Mark 12:13-17

November 9 & 10, 2019

Part 1: Pray

Every time we study God's word, we should ask God to give us the Holy Spirit to prepare our hearts, teach us and mold us into who he created us to be. Ask God to reveal his truth to transform you through your discussion time.

Part 2: Read the Text

Read the passage(s) from the sermon and take note of its truths about God, who we are as his people and what's required to follow him.

Part 3: Reflect on the Sermon

Introduction

1. As you begin, start by making an agreement within the group to be charitable, kind and godly towards each other in this discussion. Wherever possible, as Ray modeled, avoid polarizing specifics of our political climate and stick to the text and the application from the sermon.
2. What makes politics so divisive and sensitive? It was a hot topic in Jesus' ministry and it is a hot topic currently. Why do you think that is?

Being the Church: Our Allegiance

1. Ray asked, when we think about our political allegiances, we should consider who we trust and who we put our hope in? When is a time when you've struggled with putting more faith in politics than in Jesus.

2. Summarize Jesus' message from the passage. What is the significance of Jesus being the one delivering such a message? What is the significance of Jesus' contrast between the image of Caesar on the coin and the image that we bear as Christians?
3. Discuss the following three pieces of application that Ray gave: Our ultimate allegiance is to God; Don't idolize politicians or political power; Neither party is your tribe.

Being the Church: Our Posture (Humility, Gratitude, Confidence)

1. Why is humility necessary and why is it such an important part of acting like a Christian? The challenge of humility is to not hold our political views as if they are our religious views - when do you feel this challenge?
2. The Bible teaches that we should show gratitude and thankfulness for our political leaders. Discuss some of the pressures and challenges of their jobs and why we should be thankful for them.
3. One of the most important truths that we must believe in our politics is confidence that God's kingdom will not be shaken. Why is this belief so important and comforting for us?

Being the Church: Our Ethos

1. The calling of our political moment, like any other, is to “be the church” - to bring the church’s ethos to the world. What are some things that mark the church’s character that need to be applied to our political culture?
2. Jesus gained a reputation for “being” a lot of things - drunkard, Samaritan, friend of tax collectors, etc. He of course wasn’t these things, but was declared so by association. How should Jesus’ model of association inform our political interactions?

Part 4: Summarize the Message

How would you summarize the sermon to someone who has never heard it? What are your two or three key takeaways from the message and your discussion?

How does this sermon change your perspective on God? Your own heart? And/or, how to follow him?