

AVOIDING ELECTION INFECTION

INTRODUCTION

We aren't just beginning a new year. We're beginning an election year. Politics isn't an emotionally neutral topic. It has the power to divide us instead of bringing us together. Politics can so color the way we see the world that we're left wondering if someone can hold political beliefs different from our own and still follow Jesus. How would our outlooks change if we filtered our politics through our faith rather than filtering our faith through our politics?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do politics play a role in your family's mealtime conversations during Thanksgiving and Christmas? If so, do you tend to join the debate or withdraw? Why do you respond the way you do?
2. During the message, Andy said, *"No matter where you stand politically, you can find something in the Bible to support your stand."* Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. Think of a political belief you oppose so strongly you can't imagine how someone else can hold it. What questions would you ask a person who holds that belief? What value might there be in asking questions?
4. During the message, Andy said, *"Jesus followers should be the most confident, curious, composed, compassionate people in the room."* How do you think a confident, curious, composed, and compassionate person would respond to people who disagree with him or her?
5. Talk about a time when you sacrificed influence with someone in order to make a point. Did you change that person's opinion?
6. What is one practical step you can take this week to put people first and your politics second? How can this group help you to follow through?

MOVING FORWARD

Republican, Democrat, left or right, we're *all* precious in his sight. This political season is an opportunity for us to showcase our political diversity in a way that honors the God who made us so diverse. If we get this right, we'll learn something. We'll become more generous and loving people. If we get it wrong, we'll be an average church.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:37-40