

RECAP

Last weeks practice encouraged us to consider sitting down with a family member, friend, or coworker who may have a different political viewpoint than you in order to listen. We were encouraged to follow the peacemaker guidelines which were - start with story, ask good questions, listen for understanding, and be slow to take offense.

Did you have any opportunities this past week to listen to someone else who shares a different political viewpoint?

Were you able to follow any of the peacemaker guidelines?

How would you describe the experience? What did you learn through it?

IDEA 1

Rob pointed out that Matt 5:6 can be translated to include the word justice or righteousness.

- God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied (NLT)
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled (NIV)

He defined righteousness as - right by God and right by others and justice as - social engagement where things are made right for the flourishing of society.

He encouraged us to consider an interpretation that intertwines those words:

- God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice & righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

What are your thoughts and/or feelings about Rob's explanation of this verse?

How would you describe the relationship between righteousness and justice?

Where do you hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice?

In what ways do righteousness and justice inform your political engagement and decision making?

IDEA 2

Rob shared 3 invitations with us throughout his sermon. He invited us to:

- **Commit to Biblical Wisdom:** We commit to viewing our politics through the lens of Jesus - not viewing Jesus through the lens of politics. This means we allow our views to be formed and also critiqued by Scripture.
- **Commit to seeing the face of God in all:** We commit to treating all people with dignity, respect and understanding they have value to offer. We commit to avoid dehumanizing language of those we disagree with politically.
- **Pursue Righteousness and Biblical Justice:** We commit to pay attention to nudges from the Holy Spirit when injustices in our world come to our attention as we engage in civic life.

How do we live in such a way where we view politics through the lens of Jesus and not vice versa?

How much time do you spend in God's word compared to watching the news, reading blogs/articles, scrolling social media, etc?

How has Scripture formed your political view? Where has it challenged or critiqued your political view?

Where do you see dehumanization taking place? In what ways are you tempted to dehumanize others who hold a different political view?

What does it look like to treat others with dignity and respect, particularly those you disagree with?

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

Read Psalm 139:23-24 out loud together

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
 test me and know my anxious thoughts.
 Point out anything in me that offends you,
 and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

Ask God to search your hearts and point out anything that offends Him . Bring the following questions to God as you do:

- **God, where have I allowed my view of you to be shaped by my political lens?**
- **Where do I need to ask your forgiveness for dehumanizing others who view things differently from me?**
- **Where have I ignored the nudges from your Holy Spirit to the injustices in the world around me?**

After 2-3 minutes of listening to God together, invite the group to share anything that God brought to mind. You can also split up into groups of 2-3 if you sense people would feel more comfortable sharing in smaller groups.

PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK

Pick one of the invitations that Rob shared that most grabbed your attention.

As you spend time with God this week, ask him what it looks like for you to respond to this invitation.

What does it look like for me to commit to biblical wisdom? To commit to seeing the face of God in all?

Where is your Holy Spirit nudging me to pursue righteousness and biblical justice in my sphere of influence?

As you do, pay attention to what God says and respond in the specific ways He is revealing to you.