



Week 1  
Discipleship Study  
Questions



# The Politics of Jesus

With the fall election cycle in full swing, most of us are seeing in real time how the tension between faith and politics too often results in strained or broken relationships. Looking at the example Jesus gave us, we will study how we can navigate relationships and the political landscape with humility and hope, while loving others well and remaining true to our faith in Jesus Christ. Key principles taught by Jesus can equip us to better listen and engage with the people in our lives, and in the political life of our community and nation – while representing Him well.

## **Read the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Read the passage from two or three different translations.

*Group:* Have two different group members read the passage using different Bible translations.

## **Speak the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Recite the story aloud from memory (as best you can) or tell it to a friend or family member. The goal here is to get the essence of the passage in your heart.

*Group:* Have someone volunteer to recite the passage aloud in their own words, as best they can.

## **Understand the Scripture:**

*Individual or Group:* Use the Discovery Questions to help ensure you understand the passage.

## **Dig Deeper into the Scripture:**

*Individual:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions and pray about what God reveals to you through His word. Discuss with a Christian friend or family member if you choose.

*Group:* Work through the Digging Deeper questions as a group, celebrating the work God is already doing in each person's life, and encouraging each other to trust Him in the places that need growth.

# Small Group Guidelines

## **This is a Safe Group**

Confidentiality is key—what is said in the group stays in the group. Be aware how you are affecting the environment with your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing.

## **No Crosstalk**

Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations, phone time, texting etc.

## **Listen**

Let's value one another by listening to what is being shared. Allow a pause after someone shares to allow them to finish and others to consider what was said. Eye contact and body posture play key roles in creating a positive or negative group environment.

## **No Rescuing or Fixing**

We are not here to fix each other; Jesus does that part. Avoid the tendency to rescue when someone is struggling to get the words out or shares a struggle or conviction.

## **Use "I" Statements**

It's easy to talk about the issues of others, or respond with "we," "us," or "the church," but for us to grow as disciples and build relationships, we want to use "I" statements.

## **Don't Over-Talk**

We want to create time for all members of the group to participate in the discussion. Be careful not to always be the first responder or regularly give long responses.

## **Fight for Relationship**

It's not if conflict or hurt feelings will happen, but when. We commit to fight for relationship with each other. Go to the person and share your struggle or seek wise advice if you are not sure how to handle the conflict.

## Week 1

**Background:** In the final hours before His death, Jesus took time to pray. We – the believers in the church of 2024 – were on his heart in that moment. Jesus was no stranger to turbulent political times; He lived in a community that was deeply divided as well. As we enter the election season, we can take heart knowing that we have a Savior who understands our circumstances, who has already covered us in prayer and who continues to intercede on our behalf.

**Read:** *John 17:6-23*

### **Discovery Questions:**

What do we learn about God in this passage?

What do we learn about what it means to be a follower of Christ in this passage?

What do you think the Holy Spirit might be teaching you personally through this passage?

Is there anything God is leading you to do after reading this passage?

### **Digging Deeper:**

Do you consider yourself a “political” person? Does talking about politics energize you or make you nervous?

How did Jesus specifically pray for all believers? What did He ask God to do for us?

How does Jesus describe His relationship with the Father? What kind of relationship can we have with the Father?

Why does Jesus ask the Father for unity in the church (v.23)? What, then, happens if the church is not unified?

### **End this time with a prayer.**

*Heavenly Father, thank you for praying for us, even in Your hour of greatest turmoil. It is your heart that all believers be unified. That's not an easy task. Help us to put aside anything that is secondary and to focus on what unites us to our brothers and sisters in Christ, humbling ourselves as Christ humbled Himself. We want to make Your name known and preach the truth of who You are. In Jesus' name, Amen.*