

Unpacking the Preach

Date Sunday 24th October 2021
Sermon Title Discipleship & Politics
Bible Passage 1 Peter 2:11-12 & Jeremiah 29:7

Recapping the preach

Nick spoke of Politics ultimately being about ordering our communal lives together – and asked whether this should be outside of God’s care and attention?

Jeremiah and Peter, it seemed heard the same message from God when asking His people to influence those they live alongside, those who shared different policies of human well-being – both were told by “living such good lives” that they would silence their accusers and God would be glorified.

God’s politics are for all humankind to prosper, they are not ideological for a select group, so rather than being unduly influenced by those in power whose politics are of an ideological nature, we should be influenced by God’s politics which should in turn change ours.

We either ‘vote’ for a society Jesus wants – or we don’t. The real problem we don’t ‘vote’ or get involved with God’s politics is because we are too comfortable and remain untouched ourselves by them. God wants us to be challenged and humbled so that we can walk alongside the poor, vulnerable and marginalised and be counter cultural like Christ.

Our faith is deeply personal, but it should not be private, as he is interested in our social values and public life – a great way to witness God’s love through our love for Christ and our trust in the Holy Spirit to guide us. “The government will be on his shoulders” (Isaiah 9:6) and the King has instituted the law of love that we should promote it wherever we find ourselves. Be ruled by this government of grace or by Anarchy.

If we do not adopt God’s politics, we remain blind to what it is to be kingdom people. Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed are they that keep the law”.

• Questions for reflection

- Politics and Faith can both be divisive and emotive subjects to discuss, why do you think this is? (*Youth – think of things that you agree or disagree with in society, and what that feels like? Can this be like issues of faith that are sticky subjects to understand?*)
- Jesus speaks of being Salt & Light in Matthew 5:16; yet how can a Christian be that, if what they believe in contradicts (so it is said?) what the world around them says is good? (*Youth – if you fall out with or disagree with someone – what behaviours allow you to remain friends with them?*)
- Through Jeremiah God speaks to His exiled people in an apparent God-forsaken land, and tells them it will prosper with them being in it? Can you draw any parallels with today and what may that mean for the Christian where they live? (*Youth – how can you make a difference in places where people don't share your type of values?*)
- How much of your own political stance, upon reflection, is shaped by God's politics? (*Youth – what things stir your emotions? Where do these come from do you think?*)
- What in God's word would you use for a 'strapline' that promoted your parties' manifesto? Why? (*Youth – what picture in the Bible would you use as a Profile picture to best describe you or your ideas on how life should be led?*)
- Do you agree that most people are untouched by politics because of their comfortable lives? What does this say about our approach to faith? (*Youth – what on the internet or news on the TV makes you want to turn away? Why do you think this is and how easy is it to forget about it?*)
- Why should we overlap with those on the margins? What should this be doing in us? (*Youth – how does it make you feel when you see someone begging for food or being bullied?*)

Going Deeper

- Stu spoke a few weeks back about our meeting with Jesus having to be transformational, the fact that when you meet Jesus you cannot help being changed in some way.
- Q: God's politics should change ours, with our faith becoming a public affair rather than private; how does your understanding of

the incarnation apply to this – that God’s nature is to be willing to be with us?

Response

- Willingness to adopt and promote God’s policies for a better society.
- Trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit to take your good deeds and use them to transform the people and places you are in.
- Seek humility in walking alongside those who we are called to love and support.

Prayer pointers

- Strength to endure the obstacles that come our way when living out God’s politics.
- Wisdom to know which battles to fight.
- Allow the uncomfortableness of being challenged to transform us.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>