



The INTERSECTION *of* RELIGION & POLITICS

Small Group Study Guide

October 18, 2020
"United We Stand"

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for preserving this powerful prayer we are studying today that your son made 2,000 years ago. During this crazy political season, would you help our Church stay united? Would you help us see our politics through the lens of faith? And forgive us for the times we create a version of faith to support our politics. Teach us how to disagree politically but love unconditionally. We pray this in the matchless and powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

INTRODUCTION

At the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, the thing he was most concerned about was the unity of his followers. It was so important to him that he prayed for unity. But why was this so important? And what does this have to do with politics?

Jesus knew that if his followers had a unity of purpose (not politics) they could change the world. While we will not agree on every political talking point, we must not let politics divide us. Your favorite candidate will win or lose based on how our country votes this November. However, the church will win or lose based on our behavior between now and then. So, disagree politically, love unconditionally and pray for oneness.

QUESTIONS

- 1) On a scale of 1 to 10, how interested are you in politics?
- 2) What do you look forward to the most and dread the most about presidential election years?
- 3) Outside of your workplace, think of the people you interact with the most. What percentage of those people think pretty much the same way you do politically?
- 4) In all honesty, which of these describes you the best? Why do you say that?
 - a) I evaluate my politics through the filter of my faith.
 - b) I create a version of faith that supports my politics.
- 5) Read John 17:20-23 on page 1. What stands out to you? In verse 23, Jesus prays for unity. How would you define 'unity'? According to Jesus' prayer, why is unity so important?

FINAL APPLICATION

When it comes to politics and moving toward unity, what's a next step for you?