



SERMON NOTES

Week 4 October 27, 2024

“Jesus, Politics and Religion”

Matthew 5:43-48



I. Introduction/Review

- A. In this sermon series, we are looking at ways we can play a role in lowering the polarization and increasing the _____ across our community.
- B. Our _____, should impact both our political views and how we practice our politics.
- C. According to Jesuit Catholic priest Matt Malone, we need to acknowledge that we are all _____, in some way, in the division and polarization of our nation.

II. How Should Our Faith Impact Our Political Views?

- A. What Jefferson meant by the ‘separation of church and state’ was that the government could not establish a state church, nor could it prohibit the free exercise of _____.
- B. Harold Laswell defined _____ as who gets what, when, and how.
- C. As _____, we have to decide how the candidate’s political visions align with the Christian values, ethics and moral vision we hold.
- D. Three things we should look at in _____ candidates are character, competence, and convictions.

III. How Should Our Faith Impact Our Practice of Politics?

- A. When it comes to politics, Jesus calls us to not simply love our neighbor, but even those we perceive as an _____.
- B. Loving our enemy is a reflection of the character of _____.
- C. Bless, encourage and do something _____ for someone in the other political party.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE Oct. 28 - Nov. 2, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Some people believe that there should be no connection - that even the *talking* about faith shaping our politics violates the separation of church and state. But that is not what the constitution says. What Thomas Jefferson meant by the 'separation of church and state' was that the government could not establish a state church, nor could it prohibit the free exercise of religion.

Monday: Matthew 5:21-22, 43-48

"Idiot"? "Fool"? We're just kidding, right? Not in Jesus' day. The Aramaic and Greek words he cited could destroy a person's reputation and label that person as less than human. What kinds of words and ideas do we use today (in politics, but not only there) to create the same effect? How is that kind of speech (and thinking) the direct opposite of loving your neighbor?

Tuesday: Matthew 7:1-5

Of course, Jesus' words applied not just to politics but to all relationships. Think about all the family or friend relationships you have. Is it possible for two people to care deeply about each other's well-being and yet come to different conclusions about the best way to address issues that arise? Can they work together toward solutions without doubting each other's honesty or motives?

Wednesday: James 3:4-12

Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Your general outlook on life might be influencing the words you speak. God created humans with the ability to control their tongue; you have that ability. But we humans are also imperfect; and at times we make undesirable or hurtful statements, even though this is not God's hope. What helps you to speak life-giving words rather than destructive ones, whether you're feeling optimistic or pessimistic right then?

Thursday: James 4:1-6, 11-12

When you find yourself with strongly negative feelings about a political candidate or election winner, do you ever look inside and ask, "What is there in me that feels threatened or frightened by this person?" In what ways can James' wisdom, encouraging us to recognize the inner sources of conflict, help us love our neighbors in more Christ-like ways - in politics and other parts of life?

Friday: Ephesians 4:25-32

Ephesians 4:32 said our ideal is to treat one another "in the same way God forgave you in Christ." Have you learned ways to "be angry without sinning" (verse 26)? What steps can help you grow a character strong enough to treat others as God treats you?

MOVING FORWARD

Our faith, should impact both our political views and how we practice our politics. We have to decide how the candidate's political visions align with the Christian values, ethics and moral vision we hold. This may lead us to disagreements among who Christians support. Where we should not have disagreement is how our faith should impact how we practice our politics. Jesus makes it clear that we need to love our enemies, even those of the other political party. This week, bless encourage and do something kind for someone in the other political party.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) love, B) faith, C) complicit. IIA) religion, B) politics, IIC) Christians, D) political. IIIA) enemy, B) God, C) kind.