

GOING THERE

DISCUSSION GUIDE

POLITICS

Introduction

A presidential election and charged-up political season in the middle of one of the most challenging years our nation has faced is a recipe for division, frustration, and confusion. What does it look like to rise above the heated exchanges while also talking about issues that matter? This series of conversations will help us “go there,” using the Bible, God’s revelation, as our guide for both how we think about some of the bigger issues we are voting on and how we can engage others with what we think.

In order to create a safe, welcoming, and authentic space, please share these ground rules before you start and follow them during the conversation:

- As you discuss, believe the best about one another.
- Participate by seeking to understand, rather than change someone’s mind.
- Look for common ground.
- If things become too heated, call a time-out and take a breather.
- Share and affirm personal experiences.

Discuss Together

- On a scale of 1-10, how interested are you in politics?
- What do you most look forward to—and dread most—about presidential election years?
- Read **Philippians 3:20** and **2 Corinthians 5:20**. What does it look like for you to be Christ’s ambassador this season?
- Pastor and author Andy Stanley said, “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.” What, in your opinion, is the difference between winning and losing behavior for the church this season?
- Jeff said, “What is happening now more than ever in such a polarized culture is that we choose sides, choose our party, and demonize those on the other side.” Do you think this is the case? What personal behaviors, tendencies, and attitudes in our culture drive polarization?
- Read **Ephesians 4:1-6** and **Titus 3:1-2**. What are some core convictions, values, and principles you see in these passages that apply to engaging in politics well?
- Do you have some non-negotiables or personal guidelines for how you engage in charged political conversations? If so, what are they?

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- Some of us are struggling with wanting to engage in politics much at all this season. But as Jeff said, our vote and engagement matter—we are called to steward our power thoughtfully. Is there a way you feel called to engage more?
- We all have room to grow in how we serve as ambassadors of Christ. Which of these do you need to focus on first?
 - Being humble and gentle.
 - Being patient; bearing with one another in love.
 - Fighting for unity in the church; civil obedience and respect.
 - Avoiding slander.
 - Standing up for what is good.
 - Being considerate.

Next Steps

There is so much noise in our culture and our daily lives: social media, news media, and stressful conversations at work, school, or with family. So, take a few hours to purposefully lower the noise sometime this week on your own. Put down the phone, turn off the screens, and go somewhere quiet to be with God. Ask Him to guide you and to help you be His ambassador this season.