

Cultivate Reflection Guide

ELECTION

Week of October 4, 2020 – The Downside of Democracy

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

When the political stakes are high, it's hard to know who to follow and what to believe. Join us as we reflect, respond and pray through our "Election" series and together learn to see politics through the eyes of God.

Update: Over the next 6 weeks, many Cultivate groups are participating in our fall bible study. You can still join us at cultivate.sc/fall20. With our study in mind, we're modifying the weekly reflection guide so that, if you choose, you can continue to respond to our weekend series and still have capacity to enjoy the full experience of our bible study. Whether in community or through personal reflection, simply choose one of the following questions to live out what we're learning on the weekends.

Reflect & Respond: Pastor Matt challenged us that while politics is the movement of people to determine their future, election is the movement of God to determine our eternity. He cautioned us not to fall in love with democracy, but to fall in love with God. Reflect on 1 John 2:15-17 NLT:

“Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.”

What would those looking at your life from the outside say you most love? Are you known for loving and following God OR are you known for wanting more for yourself, pursuing pleasures, achievements and possessions? Take inventory and reflect on your habits, choices, pastimes and wanting. God is NOT asking us to live an empty life, but He is telling us that living in obedience to Him is a treasure that will never fade.

Be REAL with God. Invite Him to search your heart and show you if there is anything this world is offering you that you're partaking in more than what pleases Him. Pray and give those things to God, asking Him to help you order your priorities and put them in their rightful place beneath Him.

Faith over Fear. “For God will never give you the spirit of fear, but the Holy Spirit who gives you mighty power, love, and self-control.” 2 Timothy 1:7 TPT

Whether it's the nightly news, current politics or simply our own personal anxieties, you likely don't have to look far to find something scary. *When we are led by fear, we are not led by God.* Is there any place in your life where you're battling fear? What do you do when that fear rises? How could you lead your fear through your faith rather than let your fear control you?

Think practically and plan. “When I'm afraid, I will _____ [read my bible, pray, listen to a worship song, talk to a trusted friend, ask for help, turn off the news, stop scrolling, etc.]” Pursue your plan intentionally, so that when fear rises, you run toward faith with power, love and self-control SO THAT God can lead you.

A Choice to Make: God has already chosen us, but choosing Him every single day takes courage and strength. We aren't called to follow the crowd because *the majority is not always moral*. No one can live out our faith for us and it's up to us to do better, be wiser and take a stand for what is right, good and true NOT what is popular.

Whether it's a decision you're facing, a choice you're making or a direction you're going, what would it look like for you to choose God today? Are you willing to take that stand? Pray, asking God to give you the strength of character and the courage of conviction to choose Him. He is with you and for you!