

ELECTION

Week of November 8, 2020 – How to Make Sense of Political Outcomes

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. Whether in community or through personal reflection, answer the following questions to live out what we're learning on the weekends. Remember...it's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through YOU!

1. Who do you think you are? It okay to ask God questions, but when we begin to question God, we are relying on our understanding rather than depending on His. We need to remember that we have finite perspective compared to God's infinite wisdom. We can trust God's plans for us and follow Him – heart, soul, strength and mind.

"Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm. He said: Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?" Job 38:1-2 ESV

"Then Job replied to the Lord: "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know." Job 42:1-3 NIV

"I am God, and there is none like me. Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish." Isaiah 46:9-10 NLT

How do these verses challenge the way you see yourself? What about the way you see God? Are there any areas where you are relying too much on your own thinking and not enough on God's wisdom? Ask God to right your perspective and help you to trust, follow and obey.

Dig Deeper: It takes God four chapters to remind Job of all that he does NOT know. Read Job Chapters 38-42 for some certain perspective on God's wisdom, strength and power.

2. There's a log in your eye: To make sense of political outcomes, we must realize that God cares more about personal sin than the political win. Character counts to God and it should matter to us too, however we can't be so focused on what's wrong with others, that we forget to be REAL with self.

- Do you struggle with a critical spirit? Are you quick to blame, point, judge and criticize OR are you willing to listen, learn, look inward and change? Why do you think that is? Where does that come from?
- Read Joshua 7:2-5. Are any of Joshua's mistakes (pride & arrogance, choosing the easy path, lack of spiritual direction) things you are prone to?
- When we know better, we do better. What is something you can do to cultivate personal or spiritual growth when you're tempted to point out other's mistakes?

3. Overcoming unhealthy emotions: God wants us to be in touch with our emotions, but not controlled by them. Unhealthy anger and bitterness invite the enemy into our lives. Unhealthy fear, anxiety and discouragement steal the promise and purpose of our faith. When we allow our emotions to get the best of us, we're not only living outside the life God wants for us, but we're not showing others the life God has for them.

- Which emotion - anger, bitterness, fear, anxiety or discouragement – tends to get the best of you? How does that emotion impact your life – think personally, spiritually, emotionally and relationally?
- Rather than wrestle with unhealthy emotions, what are some practical things you could do to run to God?
- God is with you; He is for you and He loves you...but He also wants you to become who He has created you to be. Tell God how you need His strength to get up and fight for your faith.

Cultivate Community: If you're struggling with anger, fear, anxiety or discouragement, confide in your community or someone you trust and share how they can pray, encourage or hold you accountable. We're here to help too! Go to sandalschurch.com/next to connect with our prayer team and ministers.