

# WHY TALK ABOUT JESUS AND POLITICS

**Pastor: Josh McPherson**

**Jesus is Lord over all of life, including politics**

## **A. Politics is not outside the lordship of Christ**

- Jesus is not Lord only over private spirituality
- He is Lord over public life
- He is Lord over civic life
- He is Lord over government
- He is Lord over national righteousness

## **B. Silence on politics is not neutrality**

- Silence often becomes surrender
- Public silence has spiritual consequences
- The church must not confuse disengagement with faithfulness

## **C. Christians must engage politics under Christ's lordship**

- Not as idolaters of politics
- Not as servants of party



- But as servants of Jesus

## **The church must be sharpened, prepared, and anchored**

### **A. The church must be sharpened**

- Sharpen thinking
- Sharpen discernment
- Sharpen courage
- Sharpen biblical instincts

### **B. The church must learn to think clearly**

- Not live on slogans
- Not be manipulated by emotional rhetoric
- Not be deceived by lies wrapped in pious language

### **C. The church must be prepared**

- Harder days may be ahead
- Believers need theological readiness
- Believers need moral clarity
- Believers need civic courage
- Believers need quicker obedience

### **D. Convictions must be built before crisis**

*OODA Loop Analogy*



- Observe
- Orient
- Decide
- Act
- Slow obedience often comes from weak categories

**E. The church must be anchored**

- The age is unstable
- Evil does not stop itself
- Evil must be resisted
- Christians need theological ballast
- Spiritual faithfulness has public implications

**Political problems are spiritual problems before they are political problems**

**A. Political crisis is downstream from spiritual crisis**

- Political problems do not finally have political solutions
- Political problems have spiritual solutions

**B. Spiritual realities shape public realities**

- Revival matters
- Reformation matters



- Church health matters
- Preaching matters
- Repentance matters

### **C. Politics must be ordered beneath spiritual realities**

- Do not put ultimate hope in elections
- Do not ignore elections either
- Seek spiritual awakening that produces righteous public life

## **Politics is about decisions that shape groups and nations**

### **A. Politics can be simply understood**

- Politics is the activity associated with making decisions in groups and nations

### **B. Christians must care because decisions affect people**

- Justice
- Flourishing
- Righteousness
- Public order

### **C. Politics is not inherently evil**

- Like sex
- Like money



- Like food
- Like relationships
- Politics can be used for good or evil

#### **D. The real issue is submission**

- Politics is not dirty by nature
- The issue is whether politics is submitted to God

### **Politics flows out of culture**

#### **A. Politics does not arise in a vacuum**

- Public policy reveals what a people already loves
- Public policy reveals what a people tolerates
- Public policy reveals what a people celebrates
- Public policy reveals what a people excuses

#### **B. Corrupt politics reveals deeper corruption**

- Do not only blame politicians
- Ask what kind of people produced them

#### **C. Cultural corruption and political corruption belong together**

- Politics is a reflection of spiritual and moral conditions

### **God is enthroned over raging nations**



**Text:** Psalm 2

**A. Nations are accountable to God**

- Nations rage
- Peoples plot
- Kings rebel
- Rulers resist the Lord and His Anointed

**B. National rebellion is moral insanity**

- Treating God's law as bondage
- Calling righteousness oppression
- Celebrating what God condemns
- Insisting on autonomy from the Creator

**C. God is not threatened by political rebellion**

- He who sits in the heavens laughs
- Heaven is not in panic
- The throne room is not scrambling

**D. The church must recover its theology of God**

- Panic is not faith
- Despair is not discernment
- God is still enthroned



## **God judges nations and preserves His people**

**Text:** Psalm 2

### **A. God gives warning to kings and nations**

- Nations have space to repent
- Rulers are commanded to bow to the Son

### **B. God judges those who refuse Him**

- National rebellion brings real accountability
- God is not indifferent to the moral direction of nations

### **C. God takes care of His own**

- Blessed are all who take refuge in Him
- Judgment may fall on a city while mercy shelters those who trust God

### **D. The church must distinguish the kingdom of God from earthly nations**

- Civilizations may collapse
- Christ's church does not collapse
- God preserves a remnant

## **Loving God and loving neighbor has political implications**

**Text:** Matthew 22:34–40

### **A. The first commandment**

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart



- Love the Lord your God with all your soul
- Love the Lord your God with all your mind

#### **B. The second commandment**

- Love your neighbor as yourself

#### **C. Politics is one arena where these commands are obeyed or disobeyed**

- Love for God has public consequences
- Love for neighbor has public consequences
- Civic action can be an act of obedience

### **Politics tests worship**

#### **A. Politics reveals what rules the heart**

- It shows whether someone worships Jesus or politics

#### **B. Political idolatry is real**

- It is right to grieve
- It is right to feel frustration
- It is right to feel righteous anger
- It is wrong to make politics your ultimate hope

#### **C. Diagnostic questions**

- What ruins your peace most quickly?



- What gives you a false sense of salvation?
- What do you believe can save the nation?

#### **D. Politics must not replace Christ**

- If politics controls your hope, politics has become an idol

### **Politics can be an instrument of obedience**

#### **A. Politics is not only a potential idol**

- It can also become a redeemed instrument of obedience

#### **B. Civic engagement can be an act of worship**

- Participating in public life can be done under the lordship of Christ

#### **C. Politics must be practiced as service, not self-glory**

- Let civic action be an expression of submission to Jesus

### **Politics is one way to love neighbor**

#### **A. Policies affect real people**

- Politics produces policies
- Policies help or harm
- Policies reward good or reward evil

#### **B. There is no neutral policy**

- Every law assumes a moral framework



- Every law assumes some definition of:
  - good
  - evil
  - justice
  - harm
  - freedom
  - dignity

**C. The question is not whether morality will be legislated**

- The question is whose morality will shape law

**D. Loving neighbor includes caring about public systems**

- Neighbor-love includes concern for laws, policies, and structures that shape human flourishing

**God and government is one of the Bible's major themes**

**A. Scripture is filled with conflict between divine authority and human authority**

- Pharaoh
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Caesar
- Pilate
- Herod
- Rulers confronted by prophets
- Rulers confronted by apostles

**B. The story of Scripture includes a clash of kingdoms**

- The kingdom of God confronts rebellious human power

**C. Politics cannot be removed from the Bible**



- To remove politics from Scripture is to remove a major part of the biblical storyline

## **Governments are accountable to the greatest commandment too**

### **A. God's commands are not only individual**

- They are also corporate
- They are also national

### **B. Psalm 2 addresses kings and nations**

- "Kiss the Son" is directed to rulers

### **C. God is not indifferent to national obedience**

- Nations are judged by God
- Rulers are accountable to God

### **D. The church must recover its prophetic voice to nations**

- The church must speak not only to private individuals
- The church must also speak to rulers, institutions, and nations

## **The more government yields to Jesus, the more helpful it becomes**

### **A. Authority submitted to God becomes a blessing**

- Power in righteous hands can do great good

### **B. Authority in rebellion grows more destructive as it scales**



- A rebellious child can damage a room
  - A rebellious father can damage a family
    - A rebellious pastor can damage a church
      - A rebellious nation can damage the world

#### **C. Wicked power becomes catastrophic**

- Ungodly authority magnifies destruction

#### **D. History warns the church not to stay silent too long**

- Evil often grows because it is not resisted early enough

### **Biblical faith necessarily collides with public life**

#### **A. You cannot be biblical without becoming political**

- Not because Christianity is partisan
- But because Christianity speaks to public righteousness

#### **B. The kingdom of God has implications for every public sphere**

- Law
- Order
- Institutions
- Leadership
- Justice
- Policy
- Public morality

#### **C. Biblical convictions create public consequences**



- Christian truth cannot remain locked in the private sphere

## **The church must not be out of step with Heaven or history**

### **A. Modern silence is not normal Christian faithfulness**

- The unusual thing is not that pastors speak to politics
- The unusual thing is that so many no longer do

### **B. Earlier Christian witness was more publicly theological**

- The church once spoke with greater seriousness about politics and public morality

### **C. The church must recover robust public theology**

- Modern discomfort must not silence ancient conviction

## **Jesus is Lord over all of life, including politics**

### **A. A king who rules only over spiritual things is too small**

- Jesus' lordship includes every realm that shapes human life

### **B. Every sphere belongs under Christ**

- Family
- Work
- Education
- Business
- Church
- Government
- Public life

### **C. Politics must be brought under Jesus**



- Because politics profoundly shapes human life
- Because Christ rules all things

## **The church is a watchman**

**Text:** Ezekiel 33

### **A. The church has a warning responsibility**

- The watchman must sound the alarm

### **B. If warning is given, people bear responsibility for response**

- The duty to speak must be fulfilled

### **C. If warning is withheld, silence becomes guilt**

- The blood is on the watchman's head

### **D. This burden belongs to the whole church**

- Not only preachers
- The people of God must reject cowardly silence

## **The church must reject both political idolatry and false neutrality**

### **A. Political idolatry is false**

- Politics is not savior
- Politics is not ultimate hope

### **B. False neutrality is false**



- “God is sovereign, so I do not care” is not faithfulness
- Silence is not innocence

### **C. The faithful position**

- God is sovereign
- Therefore Christians should care deeply
- Therefore Christians should act faithfully

### **D. Christian engagement is not partisan obsession**

- It is biblical obedience
- It is public faithfulness under Christ

## **Final Call**

### **A. Reject**

- Political idolatry
- Spiritualized disengagement
- False neutrality
- Cowardly silence

### **B. Embrace**

- Biblical clarity
- Theological depth
- Prophetic courage
- Civic responsibility
- Confident hope in the reigning Christ

### **C. Live as those who believe Christ reigns**



- Think biblically
- Discern spiritually
- Act courageously
- Love God publicly
- Love neighbor publicly

## **Summary statement**

Because Jesus is Lord over all of life, Christians must think and act biblically about politics as one arena in which love for God and love for neighbor are publicly expressed.

