

God and Politics (Youth)

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How should you think about politics as a follower of Jesus? Now most of you may not follow politics, but hear your parents or teachers discuss it. Some of you may be in a government class and follow the election for the class, but don't care too much about how it affects you individually. Well here's the thing: anyone that has authority over you does affect you, whether you know it or not. And the Bible has some important truths to teach us about authority, no matter what our politics are.

Pray for the leaders you like and don't like

God asks all of us to do one simple, but challenging, thing: pray for our leaders. Pray for people that make decisions that affect your life.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 *I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity.*

This command was a big surprise for the first Christians who heard it. It was a command to pray for the evil emperor and those who hurt and killed Christians. Today, it's a command to pray for every politician locally and nationally, even the ones you or your parents didn't vote for and don't like.

Pray for them so that you can pursue God

Paul gives us a great reason to pray for our political leaders in the verse above, "so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity." The reason you should pray for the politicians is so that you are free to pursue God. You're allowed to follow him and can live a life for him. The last thing we want is to be in a situation similar to Daniel in the Old Testament.

Daniel 6:6-7 *So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! ⁷ We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions.*

So Daniel wasn't allowed to pray to God, but he decided to anyway because God wants us to. Because of this, he was thrown into a den with lions. Don't worry, God saved him, but doesn't that sound terrible? Pray for our leaders so that we can continue to pursue God without any fear of punishment.

Pray for them so that others can pursue God

If you are a believer in Jesus, then you get to live a truly satisfying life and spend eternity in heaven. But what about everyone else? Don't you want your friends, your teachers, your family to be able to spend forever with God, too? The only way they can do that is if they learn about Jesus and trust in him, and being able to freely talk about that with them certainly helps. In fact, if people are working together to live a life that honors God, society will benefit.

Jeremiah 29:7 “And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.”

God placed you where you are, whether it's the school you're at, the neighborhood you live in, or the activities you're apart of, for the good of the people around you. A city or nation should be a better place because of the Christians who live there. When this happens, it gives God glory. So pray for the government and for leaders. Through you and your prayer, God can change the world.

Discussion Questions:

1. *Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.*
2. *What is your initial reaction to this video? Do you disagree with any of it? What jumped out at you?*
3. *How did you feel the first time you heard about an election? What have you learned about our government since then?*
4. *Read [Romans 13:1-2](#). Why does God say that obeying those in authority is important?*
5. *Read [Jeremiah 29:7](#). How good is your family or youth group at working for the “peace and prosperity” of your city? How so?*
6. *Read [1 Timothy 2:1-2](#). What can you pray for the leaders who have authority?*
7. *Do you feel like we take our freedom to pursue God for granted? Why or why not?*
8. *Write a personal action step based on this conversation.*