

Jesus, Justice & the Third Way (5 of 6) Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the recent sermons page at our website and at the Grantham Church Podcast the following day, along with the sermon slides and small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

Sunday, November 3rd, 2024



Series Focus: In *Jesus, Justice & the Third Way*, we are reflecting on the political nature of the gospel and how we are called to pledge allegiance to the Lamb—not the donkey or the elephant. We are examining Jesus’ posture and approach to political matters and seeing how he dealt with political parties, hot-button issues, and the “partisan mind” that fuels division. Join us for this timely sermon series as we consider what it looks like to follow the Lamb in an age of idolatry and division, so that we might be faithful to Christ until he returns and brings the fullness of his Kingdom on the earth.

Sermon Title: Our Third Way Witness (From the Pews to the Polls)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:1-16; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 1:27

Sermon Focus: Last week we looked at the approach and posture that Jesus had when dealing with hot-button issues and polarizing debates of his day. What does it look like to embody the Third Way today? How do we apply the Lord’s example to issues and extremes in a divided America? And what do we do about voting? In the fifth message of our series, Pastor David shares what it might look like to respond to divisive issues in a Third Way, and then he invites us to be a faithful presence and witness for Christ.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Take a couple of minutes to read Matthew 5:1-16 silently to yourself, and then have someone in your group read it aloud. This is the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. In the context, how is Jesus calling us to be “salt” and “light” and a “city on a hill” for others to see? Also, take some time to discuss how the Beatitudes challenge beliefs and behaviors of American society today.
2. Open up the sermon slides together (or print them off) and take a closer look at each of the *five* hot-button issues today that Pastor David covered briefly in his message. Reflect on the extremes and discuss what a Third Way might look like:
 1. The abortion debate
 2. The immigration debate
 3. The racism and white nationalism debate
 4. The Israel and Palestine debate
 5. The marriage and human sexuality debate
3. In his book, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Religion and Politics*, Jonathan Haidt uses the rider and elephant metaphor. He says that the rider is your logic, reasoning, and rational thinking. The elephant (which is much larger and powerful) is your emotions, passions, and gut-reactions. The elephant goes where it wants, even though the rider imagines he/she is calling the shots. In other words, we are all driven primarily by our emotions. And then we seek to rationalize and put arguments to those things we feel instinctively. Why is this so significant? Do you find this humbling? Also, how should this insight impact our approach of often trying to argue or persuade people to see things our way?
4. When you consider how much real complexity is involved on any given political issue, and that every political party seems to be getting it wrong in some way, this can make it really challenging when it comes to voting. So, what do we do? How should Christians vote? Watch this short video from Phil Vischer and then discuss it as a group: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Upj0sQnJvg>
5. Finally, take some time as a group to confess your thoughts and worries. After a time of honest sharing, remind each other of the hope we have in Christ and his gospel. How does the gospel give us hope for the future? And then close in prayer for each other, our church, our surrounding community, and our country.