

# Let's Talk Politics

Romans 13:1-7

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Amplify

## Reflect

Outline: Recap

## Realize

Points to Ponder

## Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

## REFLECT

There are two subjects many of us grew up knowing you just don't talk about at the dinner table: religion and politics. But that seems crazy when you think about how essential those two things are for everything we do in life! In our present society where most people end up polarized about some political issue, it's especially important to know what Jesus has to say about politics. Join us this Sunday as we dig into a topic we often shy away from and discover how we can amplify the message of Jesus in a politicized world!

## [LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

## REALIZE

### 1. Authority is God-given.

- **Romans 13:1-3**
- **Leader Notes**
  - In Romans 13, Paul dives into how we deal with politics as followers of Jesus. He makes the point that all authority is God-given. God has established a model of authority in all organizations he's set up in the world: the church, education, the family unit. So authority is from God, but abuses of power are never God's will. The tension we feel with authority isn't inherently because authority exists, but because certain authorities broker power in a way God never intended, instead of in the way he designed, through self-sacrificial love. When power is used the way Jesus intends it to be, it's very easy to submit to authority.
  - As his people, God has asked us to live at peace with all people, as much as it depends on us. That means, even if we disagree with the political philosophy of our government, we have to choose to submit ourselves to their authority. We represent Christ with the way we live in the world, so every decision to submit to authorities (or not) communicates something about who Jesus is.
- **Describe a time you struggled to honor an authority placed over you. What happened, and how would you handle things differently today?**

### 2. God uses government.

- **Romans 13:4-5**
- **Leader Notes**
  - God works through the human systems of government in place to accomplish his will. That's why it's especially important that we pray for our leaders (read 1 Timothy 2:1-4). If we get

upset about things going on in our nation or world, but we haven't taken the time to pray about it, we are in sin because we haven't done what we can (pray) to change the situation, and we haven't demonstrated trust in God's sovereignty over and above whatever else is going on.

- This also means we need to engage politically as followers of Jesus. Our allegiance is always first and foremost to God himself, but part of living the way God wants us to in the world is to stay informed of what's going on and to vote in accordance with the principles he's given us in his Word.
- **As a follower of Jesus, how do you think God is calling you to engage politics? Do you need to extend more grace? Do you need to engage more?**

### 3. Live honorably.

- **Romans 13:6-7**
- **Leader Notes**
  - Whether we're dealing with people in authority over us or our family members or our peers at work and school, when we follow Jesus we have to honor all people, simply because they are made in the image of God.
  - Dishonoring people means in word or in action we have torn down someone's reputation because they believed or lived differently than us - that's not how Jesus lived in the world. So as his followers, we need to take whatever steps are necessary to make right the relationships where we've dishonored someone else.
- **Was there a time when you tore down someone's reputation because they believed differently than you? How could you make that relationship right?**

### Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?