

## D-Group Lesson: American Idols #6 – Politics

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:15–16

Sermon by Paul Gearhardt

6.14.26

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**Big Idea:** Politics becomes an idol when we place our hope, identity, trust, or emotional well-being in political leaders, parties, or outcomes more than in God, and Christians must engage in politics with biblical conviction while keeping Christ as their ultimate Lord and hope.

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### Hook (Connect to Life)

#### Icebreaker

Think about the last political post, news story, election result, or political conversation that stirred a strong emotional reaction in you.

#### Discuss:

1. What emotions did it bring out (anger, fear, excitement, frustration, hope)?
2. Why do you think politics has become such a powerful force in people's lives?
3. Have you ever seen politics damage a friendship, family relationship, or church relationship?

#### Transition

The sermon challenged us to consider a difficult question: **Has politics become more important to us than God?** If so, it may have become an idol.

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### Look (Examine God's Word and the Sermon)

#### Read 1 Peter 3:15–16

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."

#### Observation Questions

1. According to this passage, who is supposed to be Lord of our hearts?
2. What should characterize the way Christians interact with others?

3. Why do you think Peter specifically mentions "gentleness and respect"?

### **Sermon Discussion**

The sermon suggested politics may be an idol when:

- Our joy or despair depends on election outcomes.
- We demonize people who disagree with us.
- We place more hope in political leaders than in God.
- We spend more time promoting political views than sharing Christ.

### **Discuss:**

1. Which of these warning signs stood out to you most? Why?
2. How can political involvement be healthy?
3. What is the difference between caring about political issues and making politics an idol?

### **Read Galatians 5:22–23**

The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

### **Discuss:**

- When people observe your political conversations or social media activity, which fruits of the Spirit would they clearly see?
- Which fruit is most challenged when discussing politics?

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### **Took (Apply It This Week)**

#### **Personal Reflection**

Rate yourself from 1–10:

- My trust is in God more than political leaders. \_\_\_\_
- I speak about political issues with gentleness and respect. \_\_\_\_
- I spend more time in Scripture than consuming political news. \_\_\_\_
- I can disagree with someone politically without viewing them as an enemy. \_\_\_\_

## **Application Questions**

1. Has any political issue, party, candidate, or media source become too important in your life?
2. Is there someone you need to show more grace toward despite political differences?
3. What practical step can you take to ensure Christ—not politics—has first place in your heart?

## **Challenge for the Week**

Choose one:

- Spend more time in Scripture than political news each day.
- Pray daily for leaders you agree with and leaders you disagree with.
- Before posting on social media, ask: "Does this glorify God?"
- Have a respectful conversation with someone who sees an issue differently than you do.
- Replace one political discussion this week with a gospel-centered conversation.

## **Closing Thought**

The church's mission is not to make Republicans, Democrats, or Independents. The church's mission is to make disciples of Jesus. Our ultimate hope is not found in a political party but in Christ, the Prince of Peace.

## **Prayer**

Ask God to reveal any areas where politics has taken a place that belongs to Him alone. Pray for hearts marked by love, wisdom, gentleness, and a greater commitment to Christ than to any political identity.