

The Big Picture

Part 1 – Politics

John 18:33-40

1. It may appear that the Christian church is taking a beating as our society becomes increasingly secular. What are the signs that this might be so? What are the signs that God is alive and well?
2. The point Steve is trying to make is that we should not be concerned that our country is no longer a “Christian Country”, because making “Christian Countries” was never our mission in the first place. To demonstrate this Steve highlights a series of passages in which God demonstrates a fierce determination for his people not to get involved with politics. Read the passages and discuss what they reveal to us about God’s desire for his church when it comes to politics.
 - 1 Samuel 8:1-7
 - Luke 4:5-8
 - John 6:15
 - Matthew 21:1-14
 - John 18:36-37
3. Then Steve suggested that the history of the church demonstrates that when the church becomes too involved in political power we lose our way and end up doing some pretty horrible things such as inquisitions and wars. Which means that losing political influence may actually be a good thing – what do you think?
4. Read and discuss: *Whether we like it or not, the church no longer has a significant place of political influence in our society, but instead of viewing that as a tragedy, God is calling us to view this as an incredible opportunity, to rediscover our unique mission and purpose in the world today. This is an opportunity to truly take hold of what Jesus wanted for us when he prayed that we would be in the world but not of the world (John 13:17-18). That we would not be entangled, or encumbered, by politics, culture, history or the ways of this world but that we would find a new freedom to pursue our calling as a people of hope.*
5. How is God calling us to be a people of hope?
6. What implications might this teaching have for the way we approach the marriage equality vote?