



WEEK ONE • 10.29

CULTURE WAR CHRISTIANITY

INTRODUCTION

Is it possible to disagree politically and love unconditionally? Lurking beneath our interactions with people with different perspectives can often be a relentless drive to win. But the church isn't here to win. Jesus never asked his followers to agree on everything. But he did call his followers to obey a new law to love others in the same way he has loved us. We'll discover what that means together as we walk through our *Not In It to Win It* series.

Remember: As a No Matter church, you likely have people who land across the political spectrum in your group. Don't assume everyone is in the same spot. Before you get started, commit to creating a safe place to process this content together by keeping the main thing the main thing and acknowledging each other's different perspectives and experiences.

DISCUSSION

1. Pastor Jesse shared his worry of history repeating itself. Not in terms of the pandemic, but in how the Church might respond to the next big crisis. Do you share this same worry? Was this a new perspective for you? Why or why not?
2. We all have voices telling us how we should respond to the crises around us. Are you aware of which voices you listen to the most that are likely creating influence in your life? Share a few of them with your group.
3. **Revisit and read Matthew 22:15-22 & Genesis 1:26-28.** Jesus responded to the Pharisees and Herodians by clarifying the real questions they should be asking. Not "Whose side is God on?" but "Are you on God's side?" How does the right question reframe your approach to the crises or "hot topics" of today?
4. What kind of influence are the primary voices in your life (the ones you identified in the second question) having on you? Are they drawing lines and demanding you take a side or helping you see how God would want you to respond, regardless of side?
5. What if we didn't take sides? What if we lived like we're on Jesus' side, no matter which side we're on politically? What would that look like? What might be different? Do you have any examples of this that have inspired you already?

APPLICATION

- **Remember what's most important.** "For Jesus, a **you** always took precedence over a **view**." (Andy Stanley, *Not In It to Win It*, p. 26).
- **Remember what side God's on.** Print or write these statements down to help you remember what it means to be on God's side:
 - of loving your neighbor as yourself
 - of doing unto others as you would have them do unto you
 - of loving your enemies and blessing those who curse you
 - of justice, holiness, and purity
 - of forgiving as often as needed
 - of compassion and the elevation of the least of these
 - of being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry
 - of humility and gentleness, faithfulness, and peace
- **Remember it's intentional.** Choosing God's side instead of the sides "everyone else" demands we choose isn't easy or intuitive. Ask God for help, clarity, and wisdom. You won't always get it right, but God will honor your obedience to live like him.