



The Way of the Church

Jesus & Politics | 11.12.23

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One of the people I admire so much and respect is Dr. Tony Evans. That's Tony events. Yeah, a lot of Dr. Evans fancier is actually having speaks often on the topic of Kingdom and kingdom politics. And I loved one of the illustrations he used, he said, on a football field, there's actually three teams on the field, not just two. Now we have the obvious two that are playing against each other two competing NFL teams that are trying to get the ball into their endzone. They're clashing, they're running the opposite direction. They're both trying to win. But they create a lot of chaos and commotion. In fact, more chaos and commotion, the happier the fans are, because no one wants to watch a boring game, right. But there's a third team on the field. It's the team of officials. It's a group of referees. They're on the field, but they are not of the field. In fact, they represent the organization, the NFL headquarters, located at 345 Park Avenue in New York City. And they have been sent as representatives of the entire organizations to come and bring order into chaos. Because none other NFL teams are going to referee themselves, right. And so the team of officials have been sent to bring some order and governance into the game of football. They have a book, it's called the book of rules, or the book of rules and guidelines for engagement, referees that make up those rules, and none of the reference none of the coaches nor the players can change the rules, but they represent a set of rules guidelines of how to play the game. Now, how absurd would it be, if the referee took off his or her black and white jersey, and began to wear one of the jerseys of the two teams, like that'd be pretty crazy. And no one would expect a referee to do their wives, because they represent the organization, a greater organization. And if they were to remove their jersey, as an official ambassador or representative of the NFL, they have forfeited their ability to bring order and governance into the game because they have chosen a lesser side or a lesser team. Well, when it comes to followers of Jesus, we belong to a different kingdom. We are the third team in a sense, when Jesus came, He came to usher in God's kingdom here on earth. And when He ascended back to the Father, He has sent you and I, the Church of Jesus, the collective group of Christ followers to be his representatives here on Earth. His ambassadors, as Paul says, ambassadors of Christ of heaven, his kingdom, and God has given a book to us the Scriptures, And He has called us to live out his purpose, to preach His gospel, to embody his character, and to achieve his purpose on the earth. And when it comes to politics, what this means is that we are Kingdom citizens first, and party participants, second, Kingdom citizens first and party participants. Second, there are teams of parties, especially political parties who are clashing in commotion. Because the news media loves disorder, and it's chaos, that makes the conversation go viral, but into a divided and volatile world. There is the church, representative of a different kingdom, bringing news of a different order of a different king of a different Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And our first and foremost identity is a we are followers of Jesus. Now, this does not mean we don't engage in politics because we should. And that doesn't mean that we don't run for office if God calls us to, we ought to, but what it means that we never take off our jersey. We are never ever separated from our identity, our primary core identity as a Christ follower, some, some may identify you by a party, because your core identity is a you are a child of God, Ambassador of a kingdom of God. And the moment we take off the jersey, the Christian identity, we actually become less and less effective as ambassadors of Jesus, to be engaged, yes. But in all of that, remember your prime, marry identity as a follower of Jesus and therefore our faith is not subservient to our politics, but rather our politics. subservient to our faith. We're Christians first, and Democrats or Republicans or Independents. Second. We were the ambassador of Jesus Jersey into a role that needs hope. And everything else is secondary kingdom, citizens first, and party participants second. Now, here's the deal. Whether you vote red or blue, you're both agreeing with me. Should they gain it's my faith that drives me to vote the way I do. It's my faith. Therefore, that's why am a Republican or a Democrat, or somewhere in between. And there's a conundrum. And we can all follow Jesus and land in different places. And I'm not here to tell you who's right and who's

wrong. Because I'm not convinced that any one party has an All right, or one party has wrong but in fact, we need to be discerning, filled with the Spirit. Look at the policies and platforms and candidates and see for ourselves through the lens of the Holy Spirit working in his what is right and best for the flourishing of humanity. But today, I do want to bring us to a fundamental point of agreement that the early church had, and particularly a phrase that drove the way Christians the first few centuries engaged in their world. It's a particular phrase that occurs multiple times in the New Testament, at least two so clearly. Notice this phrase, in First Corinthians chapter nine, verse 19, Paul says this, although I am free from all and not anyone else's slave, I have made myself a slave to everyone. In order to win more people, to the Jews, I became like a Jew to win Jews, to those under the law, like one under the law, though I myself am not under the law, to win those under the law. To those who are without the law, like one without the law, a lot of words, I know. Though I am now without God's law, but under Status with me, law of Christ, wife to Windows without the law, pausing, I'm a free man, I'm a slave for no one, but voluntarily, I have obliged my life, to the law of Christ. He repeats his phrase again in Galatians. In fact, in Galatians, Five, Verse 14, Paul says, all of the commands of God are fulfilled in the statement, love your neighbor, as you love yourself, we'll look at that phrase in just a minute. But then, in Galatians, six, he calls out this law, he says, carry one another's burdens. In this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. In the Old Testament, they had God had given 10 commandments. And the interpreters of the law then took those 10. And they made it into 16 and 30 laws to prevent people from breaking any one of the 10. But it didn't work. Because in our own ability, we were breaking God's moral law, no matter how hard we tried. So Jesus came, and Jesus said, I didn't come to abolish the law, I came to fulfill the law, to fulfill it perfectly. And for those of us who are followers of Jesus, we are the recipients because Jesus fulfilled the law of God perfectly, and we are the beneficiaries as if we fulfilled it perfectly. We are close with his righteousness. Jesus kept all of God's law perfectly. And now Paul says, because Jesus has fulfilled the law of God, my aim in life is to fulfill the law of Christ. My desire, my obligation is simply to fulfill the law of Christ. So then, what is this law of Christ? At least in two instances, Jesus begins to unravel for us, what is his law?

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What is the law of Christ are the disciples so adamantly fathered? Notice in Matthew 12, there's a conversation that happens and one of the scribes approached Jesus, when he heard them debating and saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, which command is the most important so which of all the 613 laws is the most important? Jesus answer the most important is listen Israel, the LORD our God, the Lord is one here it is, Love the Lord your God, with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength and all your mind. And the second is this love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these no other command. No other law greater than the so he's taken all 630 is Hey, forget all 613 Just think about these two. And if you can do these two, you are accomplishing all 613 Love God, all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. The neighbor that doesn't know the lawn, it drives you crazy that you don't think is worthy of love thy neighbor that votes differently than you, the neighbor that you will avoid from January to next November because of the political sign in the yard. And then you go and invite them to Christmas Eve service in December Yeah, that neighbor. Love your neighbor, the person that in your mind is most unworthy of love Jesus has the law of God, the law of Christ is a love that person. In other instance, in John 13, Jesus has with his disciples the upper room. And he says the same thing again, I give you a new commandment, but this time, he clarifies how we can do this. Love one another. That's been said before, but just as I have loved you, here's the pattern. Here's the power for how you can do that you cannot do this by yourself, but because I have loved you, just as I have loved you. And those six words just as I have loved you. That's revolutionary. Because we don't love based on how we feel like loving or how they have loved us know we love based on how Jesus has loved us, he says, Love one another just as I have loved you, you are all sort of love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. The way that the world knows that we are disciples of Jesus is not by the brand of our politics, but by the brand of our love. What kind of love do you embody? Not by the politics we ascribe to but the brand of love, we embody a love the loves, like Jesus loved. I can't imagine that when Paul is talking about the law of Christ. He is thinking of anything less than these two instances where Jesus summarized all of the laws and all of the commandments into this law of love. In fact, I think the law of Christ is a law of Christ centered, Christ dependent Christ, empowered love for others. Love that can only emanate from the Heart of Jesus Himself. Last week, we looked at how when Jesus was in front of Pilate, and very he is being accused being trial being charged, about to be crucified. Jesus could have chosen the way of the world and defended himself, save himself got out of the situation. But what did he do? He chose the way of the cross. Instead of the way of the world, he chose the way of the cross because no greater love has anyone shown than one who will lay down his life for another. The cross was the most vivid demonstration of God's love, the love of Christ. Love the sacrifices of love that is unconditional. Love, has no requirements. And that Jesus embodies a grace filled forgiveness covered mercy, filled love for the world. This is the law of

Christ, the way of the cross. And I want to tell you today that the way of the cross the law of Christ so beautifully, dramatically displayed on the cross, that way of the Cross became the way of the church. In the first several centuries of the Christian church, The Way of the Cross became the way of the church meaning the Law of Jesus, the love of Christ, how he loved us, was so seared onto the conscious of early believers. They didn't just live by it, they changed the world because of it. This law of Christ that they obliged their life to transformed the most powerful empire of the day. In fact, it turned the political and cultural and social environment of the Roman Empire upside down, not because of the laws of the land, but because of the law of Christ seared inseparably from the conscious of the early church. As a sociologist, a brilliant sociologist by the name of Rodney Stark, who wrote in 1996, a book called *The rise of Christianity*. In fact, the subtitle is how the obscure marginal movement of Jesus became the dominant religious force in the western world in a few centuries. Ronnie who is not a believer at that time, he was a self proclaimed agnostic, brilliant man self acclaimed. agnostics is I want to do a deep dive into how this Orange group of a few people in first century, turn the world upside down. How did this faith this Christian faith become the dominant religion of the world in just a few centuries. What's fascinating is Ronnie wasn't a Christian when he wrote this book, but 10 years later, he placed his faith in Christ. He says, I'm not a Baptist, but I'm an independent Christian. Because he couldn't deny the person of Jesus, and how his movement changed the world. Ronnie writes a whole deal about the early church. But there's two quotes that I thought was so fascinating. That summarizes the gist of this book about the early church. In the law of Christ. I was sued on that conscious run. It says Christianity revitalized life in the Greco Roman cities, by providing new norms and new kinds of social relationships, able to cope with many urgent problems to cities filled with homeless and impoverished Christianity offered charity, as well as hope to cities filled with newcomers and strangers. Christianity offered immediate basis for attachment. In other places. In the book, he says non believers immediately found more attachment in the Christian community than they did in their own communities. immediate basis for attachment to cities filled with orphans and widows, Christianity provided a new and expanded sense of family, to cities torn by violent ethnic strife. Christianity offers a new basis for social solidarity, and to cities faced with epidemics, fires and earthquakes, Christianity offered effective nursing services. It seems that the law of Christ wasn't just Paul's idea or commitment. It was the commitment of all the Christians of the Church of Jesus, they live and embody this love for one another that came at the cost of their own life. And he would go on in a section of the book to say I believe that it was the religious, particular doctrines that permitted Christianity to be among the most sweeping and successful revitalization movements in history. Notice this, and it was the way these doctrines took on actual flesh, the way they directed organizational actions and individual behavior that led to the rise of Christianity. Out of the whole book, this phrase is captured my heart so much, because this is before Christians had the whole Bible in their hand. Before they had 66, books nearly compiled and bound in leather. They had enough doctrines from the Old Testament, and enough of the message of Jesus circulating among them, and the life of Christ flowing through them, and the letters of the apostles directing them. He says, in the early few centuries, they had enough doctrines that took on flesh, and it changed the world. You can have all the doctrines, but until doctrines take on flesh, it doesn't do anything. But when doctrines become a mode of living, and action, and it takes on flesh, and it leads, organizations and leads behavior, leads families and leads individuals, then it changes the world. doctrines that took on flesh. If you look at historians, in the first few centuries, or look at secondary Christian literature, like Did, did, did, okay, and even sociologists who look back at that time of history, there's about seven markers that people have identified, where doctrines took on flesh, essentially,

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with a life of the early church was so radically different than first century Rome, the cultural norm of the day, if people will look at these seven things say, This is why Christianity and why Christians were treated as exiles and strangers because no one else did this. No one else believes like this. But Christians were set apart because their doctrines took on flesh in this manner. I'm gonna go through them in the time we have together because I think the cultural and social and political climate we're in these guidelines of the early church provide a way for us to be divided in politics, and yes, yet united in our posture toward one another. Here's the first one first marker of the early church. Christians believed wholeheartedly that Jesus alone was Lord and Savior. They believed in John 14 Verse six where Jesus said, I am the only way now one of the many, I am the only way to the Father, no one can come to the Father except through me. This was in a highly pluralistic community, where Romans had multiple gods even Caesar was God. Emperor will God or gods? But the Christian said, no, no, there's only one who is truly God as Jesus who died and rose from the grave. This was not just a mental assent, because this doctrine, this belief became problematic for the Christians. Because when things were not going well, in the Roman Empire, you know who got blamed the Christians? You know why they got blamed? Because the Romans said, it's because these Christians stopped worshipping our gods, and the gods that have become angry with us, that we're experiencing plagues and diseases. It's a multiple times in the early few centuries, the Roman government's had Christians, you can keep your Jesus,

but just offer sacrifices to our gods as well. Do a once a year do a once in a while, at least appease our gods. And they said no. They said we will not recant the message of Jesus we will not deny that Christ alone is Lord, He alone is king, he alone savior. And as a result, Empire wide persecution broke out, because there was a Christians who were making the Gods angry, and they refuse to fix it by worshipping pagan gods. It was doctrine that took on flesh, that Jesus alone was a savior and Lord of the world. Second marker was that radical unity. They were Christians were radically devoted to ethnic and racial equality, racial, ethnic, social equality was found in the early church when it was not found anywhere else. See, Rome, thrived off of segregation. Rome was built on the notion that some were born to rule and some were born to be ruled over. But anybody could be somebody's slave at any point. And in fact, Aristotle and others said, that's an expedient that's necessary for our culture and for our day. But not among the Christians, because until then, religion was often determined by race and you didn't change religion. So race has never mingled. But first century comes across and the message of Jesus begins to spread, and people from every race and ethnicity and social class and and and communities and upbringings begin to turn their heart to faith in Christ. But the church didn't say, Well, there's a church for the Jews here, and a church with a Gentile here. It wasn't a church with a slave and a church with a free church with a barbarian and a church with a scifi. It's a church for men and a church for women, a church for the second circumcise, and it just it uncircumcised. No, no, no, no, that's a we are one body, one church, because Christ died for us all. So the Christian church became the first and only place where ethnicities and different racial backgrounds and social backgrounds come together and be treated equally, they found equal footing at the foot of the cross. There the slave realized, the creator of the universe's may with the exact same dignity worth the value, as he sees my slave master. The slave master realize God sees my slave with the exact same dignity worth and value as he sees me, I'm accountable to him, in how I treat those under me, this type of unity was scandalous in the early church, but the Christians it was sacred. What was scandalous and for century was absolutely sacred. Because we have been reconciled to God through Jesus met, we cannot help but live and promote a reconciled life with one another. You can't have one without the other radical, disruptive unity in the early church across racial, ethnic and social lines. Thirdly, a third marker of the church was that they were deeply committed to including and empowering women, women in first century had far less rights than men did. A husband could dis own and disregard and abandon his wife, for whatever reason. A widow was often forced to marry within two years because she couldn't survive without the income from a husband. But Christian said, no, no, no, no. God made male and female, equal in image equal in dignity, equal in worth and calling. So they took care of the widows they took care and provided rights for women who had none. And the Christian movement grew because they began to include and empower women to be a part of the community and to lead within their community. That was unheard of So in a world today like today, where women still make 82 cents to the dollar compared to a man and many churches not here of entry, but many churches still exclude our sisters from roles of leadership and ministry. And then parts of the world where women are still abused, forgotten, discounted. What would it look like if the local church became the place where our sisters where women are most seen and included empowered, called out of them was there dignity inherent value, and this is not some secular feminist movement. This is just a Christian doctrine taking on flesh to God has created with equal value, worth and dignity. That x marker that shape the Christian church was a they were incomprehensibly generous toward the poor and marginalized not because there was some government that government mandated program. But voluntarily, Christians were the most generous, they didn't just take care of their own, they take, they took care of others who didn't even belong to them, they began to give of their possessions and you see this an x and you see this love the New Testament, Paul talks about a collection being made for the poor. And James says caring for the widow and the orphan is true religion, Paul and Romans 12. So we ought to be as believers, the most generous, the most hospitable, even to stranger, Steven are people we don't even know, maybe not even like. We're called to hospitality and generosity. Because going all of our back to Leviticus 919, God had prescribed to the people of God that you treat both the native and the foreigner the same. You treat the immigrant the foreigner, as if they were a native. To care for them to be generous, to be hospitable. To the stranger. I know today, there's a lot of different political views on this and I get it, I want just like you safe and secure borders and due processes. And that's good and right. But when somebody is here, when somebody's in front of you down the street from you, regardless of how they got here, the responsibility of a Christian is to be hospitable, generous, and kind. This is the way from the Old Testament all the way into the new, and Christians radically, were known to be the most generous, loving, hospitable people. In fact, Julian was an emperor who came to rule right after Constantine. So right after Christianity became the legal religion of Rome. But Julian Emperor Julian wanted to turn Rome back to paganism, and to do away with Christianity. So he began a campaign to revive the pagan religion in Rome. And he began to write to pagan priest. And what he was writing I had several coats in my pocket. But what he was writing was essentially this. Christianity is growing rapidly because of the way they radically care for the poor. Why don't you learn from them? They said to them, they take care of not just their own, but they take care of our own shame on us. Emperor Julian is looking back three centuries to say, the reason why people are so attracted to these followers of Jesus. It's because of the

commitment to the marginalized, the poor or those who have not. And Christians embody the law of Christ, seared into their conscious because the love is to give God so loved the world he gave generously. To us.

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Another marker of the early church is that they strongly champion the sanctity of all human life, unborn or preborn, and the Born sanctity of all human life. Abortion and infanticide were practiced in the early several centuries. In fact, they weren't just practice, they were encouraged. And in some moments, they were required. They had different mechanisms of abortion, then due to economic factors of a family or a lot of times due to the social concerns or concerns regarding the status of who that child would become. So abortion was often encouraged. But then there was also the practice of infanticide, which is the murdering of children right after they're born newborns. For several reasons, the it was encouraged or required, one was published and control. Infanticide was required or encouraged, encouraged other was because of the gender of a child if she was a girl, the husband not the mom, the husband could decide whether take her life or not. And if a child physical deformities, they would rid life of that child. And infanticide was often practice through exposure. Exposure means you take the newborn child, and you place him or her, often her by the side of the river, or the side of a street. And here's what they said, We're gonna flip the gods decide the fate of this child, the gods would decide the fate, if they should live or not. And, of course, many often died. But since first century on when Christians began to see this, they vehemently condemned with abortion and infanticide, because they said, a child and adults from the womb all the way to the tomb is made in the image of God. They have inherent value and worth and dignity. But they didn't just say this with their words, they showed this with their actions. So when they would see a dad go lay his daughter or son by the side of the street, they were run after them and say, give us this child. Let us raise this baby, let us take on this child. And of course, they didn't know they didn't say no, they said, Okay, you can have whatever find children on the streets and bring them into their house and raise them as their own. So historian safe if you were to go into a first century house church, you will hear loudly the singing of little girls who are rescued from the side of the street. Because they believe in the sanctity of life, this value worth of this image bearer. And it was historians will say it was the Christian unique view of life that changed the entire Empire's view of life itself to a point where in the first century, infanticide was encouraged, sometimes required. And then in the third century, it was illegal. It was deemed illegal. Why? Because the Christian message of the value of life began to spread. But the view of the sanctity of life wasn't just for children. It was also for adults, no matter their condition or age. The first several centuries, there were multiple diseases and plagues that has the Roman Empire. Specifically, in 165, all the way to 189 ad, there was the anti nine plague it some estimate that up to a third of the population died in this plague, imagine a third of the population. And of course, those in the infected regions would leave town would flee from their homes. There were no hospitals, there was no public health systems, then everyone will leave their home flee from their towns and villages except the Christians they would flee to it. They would move and settle down into these infected areas. Why? Because of the law of Christ ingrained in their heart. On their conscience, they said, We cannot let these people die without hope. Rodney says this, in his book, about the plagues, he said Christians in the plague showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of their neighbor. He lists of danger they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and many died for they were infected by their neighbors. But when they departed life, they did so serenely and cheerfully accepting their pains. Many Christians in nursing and curing their neighbors, transfer their death to themselves and died in their stead. Where do you think they got that from? Jesus who died in our stead. This is will run to villages and towns and regions where people are dying and there's no one to care for them, because we know someone who can do us something in our shoe, and we will accept the conditions the death that we may incur, joyfully and surreally serenely, because this is the law of Christ, seared onto our conscious that we cannot deny, I'm gonna keep going before the time is up. Number six, they had a revolutionary regard to sexual ethic and marriage. In first century, marital commitments had a variety of affair, they could have extramarital affair, they could have concubines, they could have temple prostitution. And especially the husband could be unfaithful, as many times in however many ways he chose to, without any consequence, but the wife could not. In first century, same sex practice was actually practiced, especially by the Roman elite. And in some cases, it was practice but we're older Roman men, mentoring younger children in sexual relationships. But the Christians came and they began what many called the first sexual revolution, not a revolution that leads to promiscuity or licentiousness, but a revolution that leads to faithfulness to covenant loyalty, a revolution that said God designed marriage from the beginning, man and a woman spending committed faithful life together for the rest of their life. The marriage is sacred, the sexuality is sacred. God's got a design for family and for sexuality, and for marriage. It was radical. You read the words of Ephesians five, with Paul commands, especially of the men, it was absolutely radical faithfulness, and service and sacrifice, the early few centuries. And this changed the world radical regard to marriage and sexuality. And keep going. The last one is that early Christians were forgiving and non violent, forgiving and non violent. They

would refuse to participate in early gladiatorial fest or feast because they said, We cannot be entertained by the brutal taking of another life. Sometimes Christians said no to serving at the Caesars pleasure in their armies, because they didn't agree with the conquest of Caesar. While everyone else was about vengeance, and revenge, Christians were about forgiveness, humility, and non violence. And this made them as Peter says, consider to be aliens and foreigners. Because there was no one who believed these things, or lived by them, no one for whom these doctrines of faith took on flesh. So here's what I want you to look, I want you to look at these seven things, markers of the early church, and I wish I could go into detail on every one of those. But most likely, if you are thinking, I know some of you already done this, if you're thinking politically, you've marked some of these to be progressive, and some of them to be conservative. And you're wondering which way is my pastor going to lean? Because when we look at all of these through a filter of politics, it's easy for us to partition and divide and citement. But if we look at it with the filter of faith, you know what we realize every one of these matters. Every one of these is essential for the flourishing of humanity. God calls us to uphold the cause of the unborn, and the borns, the residents and the alien men and women experiencing equal dignity in Christ, he calls us to be generous, and the RE formed the landscape of our world through our generosity in the world, to call people to God's view of marriage and family and sexuality. And to never recant the message that Jesus alone is the Savior and Lord of the world. Every one of these matters. When it comes to politics, we may be segmented. Some of these may matter more, based on our histories or priorities. But here's my hope for our church. Though we may be divided politically, although we may disagree. Politically, we will always agree morally, and love unconditionally.

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Though we may disagree, politically, there is a moral standard that God has invited the church to a way of life a way that his doctrines take on flesh, that we could come to a place of moral agreement, and therefore, respecting one another, and listening to each other, hearing the stories of the other. And we may not agree politically, but we can agree morally. And if we do so, we can love unconditionally. We can follow the way of Jesus the law of Christ that caused us to love one another, and mirror God's way, his wish, his desire for the world. And this is why because Christians were so committed to all of these equally, and the proclaim that they lived it by their actions and their life. They change the world, not just in how they voted or how they express politics, but in how they lived. And here's my challenge to us, that we cannot just vote our convictions and then outsource our actions. Here means we can't just vote our convictions and outsource our actions, we must do both. Every day, we get to cast a vote for the things that matter to God. In our conversations in our decisions in how we love one another and live in this world. We get to cast a vote through our actions. So yes, voting day matters. We ought to follow the convictions of our heart. But we don't just vote our convictions and outsource our actions. For the people around you in your life in your family, they must know the things of God, his world view in your heart that deeply resonates. And this is why a small group of Jewish followers a thought or some fringe group of the Jewish community, a few that were locked in a room on the first Easter morning, within the first 300, some years they became a group of 34 million. Because the law of Christ changed the world. And what this means is that it can change our world. It can change our politics, it can change our divided world. If we simply said, Lord, let us follow the law of Christ. You pray with me, Father, we give you the climate that we're living in the world we're living in, we ask You for grace, boldness, courage, but most of all, audacious love, radical unity, generosity, deep convictions, based on your word, based on your heart for the world. So we can once again see father and movement of people, as Luke 16 says, forcing their way into the kingdom of God because when they roll the sees this kind of radical love. It preaches itself. The Gospel as evidenced may we be a people not just voting, but living the heart of God and the markers of the cross the way of the cross that became the way of the church, do it now do it in this era. Do it through us and Jesus name we pray, amen. Amen.