

## The Separation of Church and Hate

### Week One – Discussion Guide

It would be difficult not to notice that the political and social climate in America seems more intense than usual. Opinions abound. Major cultural currents are clashing, leaving us in the wake. And most commentary sinks into background noise. How are Christians to live and respond in a polarized and politicized culture?

### Getting Started

Without talking about specific politicians or policies, describe how the current cultural and political climate has made you feel. What emotions have you noticed?

### What Does the Bible Say?

**II Corinthians 10:5** says, *“...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*

1) How is making your THOUGHTS obedient to Christ different from making your ACTIONS obedient to Christ? Which is harder?

2) In Sunday’s message, we heard a story about a girl’s soccer coach that said: “I’m raising a daughter who HAPPENS to play soccer. I’m NOT raising a soccer player who HAPPENS to be my daughter.”

What does it mean to be a Christian first, who happens to hold opinions about government – rather than the other way around?

3) **Galatians 2:20** reads, *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*

What do these phrases mean, practically speaking?

- crucified with Christ
- I no longer live
- Christ lives in me

4) In his book, *The Political Illusion*, Jacques Ellul suggests that modern culture has been fooled into thinking that there is a political solution for every problem that mankind faces. Would you agree with that assessment?

How does a belief in Jesus cut across this common worldview?

5) **I Peter 2:9-10** reads, *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

According to the Apostle Peter, what is the primary source of identification for the follower of Jesus?

What special purpose for Jesus-followers do you find in this verse?

### **Things to Ponder**

In what ways have I allowed other identities to become more important than my identity as a follower of Jesus?

Am I more comfortable around other Jesus-followers who disagree with me politically or am I more comfortable around people who agree with me politically but aren’t trying to follow Jesus?