

## Sessions – Politics – myfishbites.com

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### Politics / Elections

UK elections are regular events – thankfully we don't live under a dictatorship or place where we're not free to vote. We shouldn't take this lightly as it helps give us some level of freedom. Obviously the UK minimum voting age is 18 but this may help you think or get involved (even if you can't vote).

Myfishbites also has a politics assembly which you can find under our Assemblies > Politics

In this session, we'll be looking at 1 Timothy, especially 2.1–7, Daniel and Romans 13 too. We'll look at prayer, what to look for in a leader / political leader and more.

#### Write Down

Write down a list of characteristics you'd expect to find in a politician in the UK. Then write a list of what you'd ideally like to see in a politician.

Compare the two and see how they match up. You may find they are different !

#### Video Clip

The scene in a President's office from The Day After Tomorrow



Chapter 17 on DVD, 1:00:25 – 1:03:38).

This scene has discussion about a storm that has happened. The scientist (Jack) is explaining the consequences and then offers suggestions as to what to do. There is discussion about what to do and the President has to make a call about what to do.

It could be a good discussion starter about politics, making decisions, listening to opinions, the consequences of decisions and more.

Warning – There is one swear word, 'bulls\*\*t' which occurs at 1:02:54 if you want to edit or remove / fade down.

#### Read 1 Timothy 2.1-7 (in two translations)

[I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone– for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our](#)

Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles. I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. (NIV)

FIRST OF all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, For kings and all who are in positions of authority or high responsibility, that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one in all godliness and reverence and seriousness in every way. For such [praying] is good and right, and [it is] pleasing and acceptable to God our Savior, Who wishes all men to be saved and [increasingly] to perceive and recognize and discern and know precisely and correctly the [divine] Truth. (AMP)

## **Pray for government and for elections**

So 1 Timothy makes it clear that we have a massive responsibility to pray.

2 Chronicles 7.14 also suggests that as Christians, we can humble ourselves, pray, fast, seek God and even say sorry to God for what we have done and the wrong things done in our nation.

Paul urges (and admonishes which means passionately advises) that prayers should be made. This isn't a suggestion, it's not a hint either. Paul commands us to do this first of all – which means that he gives it the highest possible priority.

These prayers aren't just basic prayers, they are complex, multi-angled presentation prayers, they are complete and cover different kinds of prayers: petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings – that just about covers it.

Who are we to pray for? For all men and women and also focusing on kings and all who are in positions of authority or high responsibility. So this means the Queen, her family, the Prime Minister, the government, the opposition parties, your local MP, your local council and councillors. All those who make decisions.

Do you want the decisions of this nation to be made on a moral, Christian, Godly basis? If not why not? But most likely your answer is yes, it needs to be a passionate 'yes'. Well, if this election makes you feel dis-empowered or helpless, don't worry! If you're under 18 and can't vote, don't worry! You have a voice, you have the chance to make a difference. How? Prayer.

Why are we praying? Well, we want people to come to know Jesus. But even if they don't, as some won't, we want to cover them in prayer so that they are guided by Biblical principles, by what is right in the eyes of God..

**The Bible also gives 3 main reasons here:**

"that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one in all godliness and reverence and seriousness in every way. For such [praying] is good and right, and [it is] pleasing and acceptable to God our Savior, Who wishes all men to be saved and [increasingly] to perceive and recognize and discern and know precisely and correctly the [divine] Truth."

So, first of all, we pray for peace and for a nation (and world) where following and worshipping God is allowed. Second, we pray to God because it is right and pleasing to God. Thirdly, this is because God wishes that all men should be saved and know him and our prayers have an impact in this. The fourth thing I would add that we can draw from this is that we need to pray for those in authority so they would be guided according to God's / Biblical standards, that they wouldn't fall or be corrupt and would have wisdom to make Godly decisions.

## **Our Part**

We have our part to play in politics. First of all if we can vote, we should do. A survey from MTV said that 29% of people aged 16–24 believed that their vote would be a waste. According to another statistic, in 2015, a massive 57% of people aged 18–24 did not vote.

Here is a quote for you to think about:

*"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any" (Alice Walker).*

We must also act on our faith, make our faith count. If we deny the opportunity to vote, is this a positive expression of God's life and freedom he has given us? If we do not vote, we vote for the 'can't be bothered' party. But the life of Jesus was a life choosing to be involved, choosing to make a difference, standing up for the rights of the widows, poor, orphans, oppressed, the unhealthy and undefended. God gives us freedom of choice not to vote. But make your vote count for good, for God.

## **What do you feel passionately about?**

What issues do you feel passionately about? This will help you decide who you would vote for. There are various guides and questions online to help guide you as to who to vote for. We won't link to them as they are always changing.

Think about issues you feel passionately about (on paper) or out loud etc. Here are just some random ones we've thought about...

- Justice
- The environment
- The older generation
- The NHS
- Education
- The National Debt
- Bible truths and society
- Tax evasion
- Crime and gangs
- Unemployment and jobs
- Housing
- Christian freedoms and beliefs being silenced or taken away
- Religion
- World issues and places
- Wanting to see God's kingdom come in the UK

Most people will probably feel strongly about many or most of these. But deciding which things are most important to you will help you decide how to vote.

## **Around The World**

It is also worth looking around the world and investigating what kinds of government other countries have and how they have worked. Have they been successful or good for the country? How have they affected Christians and freedom? What have been the positives and the negatives? This may help you decide as well.

There was a famous thinker called Plato. He divided the different types of government into five categories...

1. Aristocracy – 'rule by the wise' (meaning good people, law and order)
2. Timocracy – 'rule by honour and duty' (like a good military)
3. Oligarchy – 'rule by wealth, market-economy and land ownership'
4. Democracy (and anarchy) – 'rule by the many' (pure liberty, voting, equality)
5. Tyranny – 'rule by fear and without justice' (like a despot like Hitler or Stalin etc)

## God in charge of things

*The Bible makes it clear that the very best form of government is a word called 'theocracy'. This is where God alone rules.*

God is good, perfect, pure, totally just and loving. The first book of the Bible, Genesis explains how this was God's original intention (God ruling and mankind having freedom). The last book of the Bible, Revelation explains how this is what will happen in the future. God overseeing a perfect world with no sin, nothing bad, nothing evil – just good and an amazing heaven and earth.

Try and find these verses in Genesis and Revelation and imagine what kind of world this would look like. How would things be different? How would things change? What would happen?

Now think about how you can partner with God in prayer and action to see these things happen on earth as they are in heaven already. This is part of what Jesus called us to pray for in Matthew 5 when he said to pray like this, "Our Father in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

When we think of what happens in heaven (God's good, holy and perfect will done in perfect harmony) – we can think of what this would look like on earth as in heaven.

Write down some of your thoughts...

## Romans 13 and Citizenship

Romans 13.1–7 – Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of

course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honour to those who are in authority.

There are some important points here. Write down on a piece of paper (in groups) or shout out and put onto powerpoint etc. what those points are.

Basically, we're looking at why we should be interested in politics and the election anyway, in light of what the Bible says..

### **Helpful Hints about Romans 13:**

- We should submit to the authorities so let's make sure we're praying for them! God has appointed / allowed these people into authority anyway. (Or maybe the lack of prayer has allowed these people in!!)
- rebelling against authority is rebelling against God. So the opposite is also true. Submitting and following authority means submitting to and obeying God. (There are times where we must make a stand however – if your government says God doesn't exist and can't follow him, then I would rebel against this!)
- Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.
- The one important exception to this (as we find in the words of Peter in Acts 4.19–20) is when authorities tell us to stop speaking about Jesus. We need to be wise (e.g. some street preachers aren't always wise in what they say and how they say things). But if our freedom to speak about Jesus is threatened then we need to speak up. Peter basically said to the authorities, "we have to speak about Jesus, we can't help it!"

All this isn't directly politics related but it is an encouragement for citizenship, getting involved, being Godly and encouraging Godliness. It encourages citizenship, being involved in politics and the political process.

## Resources – links all working, April 2019

- Westminster Declaration – now gone but [info can be found here](#)
- [Find out how your MP has voted \(www.christian.org.uk\)](#).
- [www.christiansinpolitics.org.uk](#)
- [The Evangelical Alliance website](#)

## Prayer Time

Pray right now for those in authority. Make a list of people in power nationally, locally and internationally. Make a list of other people you know of, even heads of companies, the World Bank, UN etc.

Get into groups and start praying

## A good politician

We'll just look at one example here and that is Daniel.

Imagine a politician who was reliable, did their job to the highest standards, had complete integrity even in the face of danger, refused to compromise his moral standards, was respected by the King and who lived completely for God. We'd like a few politicians like that huh?

## Let's have a look at Daniel and the strengths God put in him..

1. He was taken from Jerusalem in captivity to Babylon, to the King's palace. To have been taken meant he was gifted, wise, bright, able to serve and good looking!
2. The King gave Daniel and the others food and drink. Daniel didn't want the wine as it would make him unclean before God. So he asked the King's chief officer if he and the others could eat only what God said was OK to eat. After a time of testing, it proved that Daniel and the other Israelites were more healthy and better fed than the others! They also showed more wisdom and understanding than the others!
3. Daniel became the King's servant. He also correctly interpreted the king's dreams – a word for modern day prophets!
4. The King then built an idol and ordered everyone to bow down to it. Daniel and his 3 buddies refused and made the King mad. So he had them thrown into a

scorching hot fire. The King questioned God's power to save. Big mistake! Daniel spoke words of faith and God honoured his faith – 'God will save us, but even if he didn't, we won't bow down to your statue'. I like his attitude. Of course, Daniel and the 3 others walked out unharmed. As a result of this, the King bowed down before God, the one true God and protected the rights of those who followed God!

5. One of the next times Daniel interpreted a dream, he was promoted – to third highest rank in the whole kingdom!! Then we find that Daniel's honesty, integrity and ability was so great the King appointed him as one of the supervisors over the kingdom's 120 governors, to stop them cheating the king. He did this so well he was promoted again, to top spot. Nothing could be found against him. Nothing!

6. We find that Daniel prayed to the Lord God 3 times a day – in public – a lesson to those modern day pharisees who insist all prayer should only be in private...

7. So the jealous other officials made up a scenario so they knew Daniel would get into trouble, getting the king to order that for 30 days no-one should worship any god except the king. Of course, Daniel carried on worshipping and praying God so he had to be taken into the lion's den. The king didn't want to lose this top man but had to go through with it. However, he was so concerned, he didn't eat, didn't sleep and rushed to the lion's den at dawn to check on Daniel. Of course, Daniel was still there, hanging out with the lions..

8. The result? The men who'd disrespected Daniel (and therefore God) were eaten by the lions, Daniel retained his position and the King Darius ordered that everyone must fear and respect God, the one true God, the living eternal God whose kingdom will never be destroyed and whose rule will never end.

9. Daniel then went on to receive some more visions and prophetic words, but that's another story..

## **Other great men and women in government**

There are three other amazing characters worth looking at in the Bible:

- Esther (Book of Esther)
- Mordecai (Book of Esther)
- Joseph (Book of Genesis)



## **Final Thoughts**

Wouldn't you like to have some politicians like that?!? Maybe God's calling you to be that person. It could be in your school or college, with your mates, in your church, a future career. Whatever you do, get involved and make a difference.

**Imagine if Daniel hadn't taken a stand for God, what would the consequences have been? Inefficiency, dishonesty, rebellion, corruption. Imagine the difference you could make in your city or nation.**