

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Nov 8, 2020
The Psalmist's Post-Election Reflection- Psalm 33:12-22
Pastor Temple, 10:30am, see www.Christchurchsl.org/sermons

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

Opening Discussion Question: How does it feel to have this presidential campaign behind us? Are you exhausted?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week's sermon message (see www.christchurchsl.org/sermons) and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows.

Psalm 33:12-22

¹² **Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.**
¹³ **From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind;**
¹⁴ **from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—**
¹⁵ **he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.**
¹⁶ **No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength.**
¹⁷ **A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save.**

¹⁸ **But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him,**
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,
¹⁹ **to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.**
²⁰ **We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.**
²¹ **In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.**
²² **May your unfailing love be with us, LORD, even as we put our hope in you.**

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- Does a nation need to be a theocracy for the Lord to be its God (verse 11)? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to be a citizen of heaven first before being a citizen of any nation?
- How does having the phrase "In God We Trust" on American currency as well as being adopted by the government as a national motto, encourage the freedom of this dual citizenship in private and public life?
- What can we conclude about the kind of relationship God has with his people from verses 13-15?
- Why are nations so tempted to trust in the things they can control or amass rather than the Lord (verses 16-17)?
- How can looking primarily or solely to such things for security, even for people of faith, result in a functional atheism?

- Why is it important to keep Biblical convictions as primary in sorting through one's personal politics?
- In determining how to respond to those with whom we disagree?
- How did Jesus associate with or communicate with those whom he disagreed with?
- Verses 18-22 suggests another way, where trust in the Lord is central. Which of these verses speak most to you and why?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read aloud 1 Timothy 2:1-4.
- In verse 2, Paul makes a connection with Christians praying for kings and all those in authority and the ability to live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. How is praying in this way a practical demonstration of "trusting in the Lord?"
- Verse 3 suggests that such praying and the peaceful and quiet lives that result from it are pleasing to God. What kind of relationship does Paul seem to be encouraging Christians to have with the governing authorities here and what kind of societal goals are presented here?
- Verse 4 reveals that God also "wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." How are Christians to go about pursuing these defined desires of God- a peaceful society and evangelism and discipleship extended to all people?
 - Are they separate endeavors or do they go together?
 - Why do you think they often seem separate in public life?
 - How do you think a Christian can best pursue these in today's world?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- How can we keep Biblical principles ahead of any political positions, preferences or priorities?
- How does trusting in the Lord as our shield and help rather than the things of the world affect our response to hardship and loss?
- How do you think the nation would be different if the amount of attention and energy that went into political communications and demonstrations this past election instead went into sharing Jesus with the nation in word and deed?
- Is there anyone you feel called to apologize to or reconcile with this week?
- Would you be willing to commit some time for prayer this week for the nation, the president, the president-elect and others in authority? When?

Witness and Closing (5 minutes)

- How would you be willing to share the message of Jesus or the blessings of a church connection with those around you this week?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting