



Rock Point Church

Bill Bush | 5.3.26

Big Idea: The gospel, not the government, fulfills hearts and fixes people.

Ecclesiastes 4:13-16 (NLT)

¹³ It is better to be a poor but wise youth than an old and foolish king who refuses all advice. ¹⁴ Such a youth could rise from poverty and succeed. He might even become king, though he has been in prison. ¹⁵ But then everyone rushes to the side of yet another youth who replaces him. ¹⁶ Endless crowds stand around him, but then another generation grows up and rejects him, too. So it is all meaningless—like chasing the wind.

Isaiah 6:1-13 (NLT)

¹ It was in the year King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple. ² Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ They were calling out to each other, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven’s Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!”

⁴ Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.

⁵ Then I said, “It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”

⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ He touched my lips with it and said, “See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven.”

⁸ Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?”

I said, “Here I am. Send me.”

⁹ And he said, “Yes, go, and say to this people,

‘Listen carefully, but do not understand.

Watch closely, but learn nothing.’

¹⁰ Harden the hearts of these people.

Plug their ears and shut their eyes.

That way, they will not see with their eyes,

nor hear with their ears,

nor understand with their hearts

and turn to me for healing.”

¹¹ Then I said, “Lord, how long will this go on?”

And he replied,

“Until their towns are empty,

their houses are deserted,

and the whole country is a wasteland;

¹² until the Lord has sent everyone away,

and the entire land of Israel lies deserted.

¹³ If even a tenth—a remnant—survive,

it will be invaded again and burned.

But as a terebinth or oak tree leaves a stump when it is cut down, so Israel's stump will be a holy seed."

The gospel, not government, fulfills hearts.

Why Government is Never Enough:

Identity: Politics gives a fast answer to "Who am I?"

Belonging: politics gives a tribe.

Certainty: politics simplifies a confusing world.

Moral Superiority: outrage can feel like righteousness.

Fear Control: politics can feel like protection against collapse.

Result of looking to politics:

- We become angry but not peaceful, reactive but not wise, loud but not loving, certain but not careful, tribal but not truthful.

Quick Diagnostic II Have You Replaced the Gospel with Government?

- Peace rises and falls with elections.
- Fear or despair controls the heart when a side loses.
- Political identity feels stronger than identity in Christ.
- Opponents are viewed more as enemies than as people Jesus died for.

- Political content consumes more attention than prayer and Scripture.

When the ground shakes politically, how do you react and what do you see?

The Gospel, not government, fixes people.

2 Timothy 2:3-4 (NLT)

³ Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

⁴ Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

What happens when the mission gets blended...

- The church loses clarity.
- The church sounds partisan before it sounds Christian.
- The church trades disciple-making for culture-war energy.
- External compliance gets confused with inner transformation.

Am I trying to fix people through laws and outrage, or loving them enough to point them to Jesus, who alone can renew their hearts?

What should we do?

- Engage politically, but do not expect politics to save.

- Care about justice, but do not lose peace.
- Vote, speak, and participate as citizens, but anchor hope in Christ.
- Filter politics through Scripture, not Scripture through politics.
- Love neighbors, including political opponents.
- Refuse entanglement that distracts from Christ's mission.

John 12:37-50 (NLT)

³⁷ But despite all the miraculous signs Jesus had done, most of the people still did not believe in him. ³⁸ This is exactly what Isaiah the prophet had predicted:

“Lord, who has believed our message?

To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm?”

³⁹ But the people couldn't believe, for as Isaiah also said,

⁴⁰ “The Lord has blinded their eyes
and hardened their hearts—
so that their eyes cannot see,
and their hearts cannot understand,
and they cannot turn to me
and have me heal them.”

⁴¹ Isaiah was referring to Jesus when he said this, because he saw the future and spoke of the Messiah's glory. ⁴² Many people did believe in him, however, including some of the Jewish leaders. But they wouldn't admit it for fear that the Pharisees would expel them from the synagogue. ⁴³ For they loved human praise more than the praise of God.

⁴⁴ Jesus shouted to the crowds, “If you trust me, you are trusting not only me, but also God who sent me. ⁴⁵ For when you see me,

you are seeing the one who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark. ⁴⁷ I will not judge those who hear me but don't obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it. ⁴⁸ But all who reject me and my message will be judged on the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken. ⁴⁹ I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ And I know his commands lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells me to say."

GROUPS QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message, and why?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 4:13–16. Why do you think we are so quick to put our hope in a new person or a new movement to finally "fix" things?
3. What are some ways you have seen political leanings become a stronger identity for people than their faith in Christ?
4. Read 2 Timothy 2:3–4. What does it look like practically for a believer to avoid getting "tied up in the affairs of civilian life" to the point of distracting from their primary mission?
5. Read John 12:42–43. In what ways do we face pressure to align with a specific political side just to stay in favor with our social circles?
6. Since laws can regulate behavior but cannot regenerate the heart, what is an example of a time you saw a behavior change while the underlying heart remained the same?
7. Read Isaiah 6:8–10. How does our own heart get "hardened" in a way that prevents us from seeing political opponents as people Jesus died for?
8. If our peace or despair rises and falls based on who is in power, what does that tell us about what we are actually

anchored to? What is one specific way you can filter politics through Scripture this week rather than filtering Scripture through a political lens?

9. How can you practically love a neighbor with a different political viewpoint in a way that points them toward the Gospel?