

Matthew 22:15-22

The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Commentary from Facilitator, Maggie Gough

We have a messy history with faith and politics. It’s even in our Bible. This week’s discussion we’ll dive into Phil’s blog from last week along with the news regarding a Christian Super Pac.

In the News

Bipartisan Christian group forms super PAC to oppose Trump

WASHINGTON (AP) — A group of prominent Christians from both sides of the aisle, including a past faith adviser to former President Barack Obama, is forming a political action committee designed to chip away at Christian support for President Donald Trump in the final weeks of the 2020 campaign.

Dubbed Not Our Faith, the new super PAC plans to roll out six-figure TV and digital ads focused on Christian voters — particularly the evangelical and Catholic voters who helped power Trump to victory in 2016. Its first digital ad, set to run in Michigan and Pennsylvania, takes sharp aim at Trump’s claim to a foothold with Christians.

The ad, shared with The Associated Press in advance of its release, says Trump “has used Christianity for his own purposes,” invoking imagery of the Republican president’s photo op outside a historic Washington church amid this summer’s racial justice demonstrations. Urging Christians to break from Trump, the ad states that they “don’t need Trump to save them. The truth is that Trump needs Christians to save his flailing campaign.”

Keep reading Bipartisan Christian group forms super PAC to oppose Trump by Elana Schor with AP News

<https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-donald-trump-political-action-committees-christianity-campaigns-942797a20ac8fe9bd9b12edd0adc651a>

Rector’s Blog: When Jesus Votes

In Ireland, during the Troubles, if someone was asked, "Are you a Catholic or a Protestant?" and they responded, "I'm an atheist," the question would come back immediately, "But are you a Catholic atheist or a Protestant atheist?"

During the long conflict over the status of Northern Ireland's relationship with the United Kingdom, being Catholic became shorthand for pro-independence, while Protestant meant crown loyalist. It didn't matter what your actual religious beliefs were – not really: For most people, this was not primarily a question about Jesus. This was a question about country and ideology.

While the United States is not currently at the level of upheaval Ireland experienced during those days, we are in a place of deep division. And many of the conversations I've witnessed or participated in could be boiled down to this exchange:

"Are you a conservative or a liberal?"

"I'm Christian."

"But are you a conservative Christian or a liberal Christian?"

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<https://www.redeemer-cincy.org/blog/rectors-blog-when-jesus-votes/>