

CONFLICTED ALLEGIANCE



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1. DEFINING OUR TERMS

- **Pledge:** a promise
- **Allegiance:** something you're willing to give everything to
- **Privilege:** the ability to walk away from the plight of those on the underside of power
- **Politics of Jesus:** Ordering society in light of the kingdom of God
- **Cross & Country:** Idolatrous Nationalism. "Good of empire = Good of God's Kingdom"
- **Apolitical and Isolated:** Insular, privileged and apolitical church
- **Conflicted Allegiance:** Pledging our allegiance to the Kingdom of God while leveraging our nation-state citizenship on behalf of those on the underside of power
 - Living in an empire while being faithful to the kingdom of God
 - Fidelity to the kingdom, not to a party

2. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL EXAMINATION

- How has your inherited privilege and proximity to power informed how you read the Bible and interpret its story?
- Reflect on your upbringing. Did the *Cross and Country* or *Apolitical and Isolated* paradigm most speak to the way you were taught to engage the nation-state as a Christian? Why and in what ways?
- When you think of the 2020 Presidential Election season, what emotions or feelings come to the surface for you?
- Do you feel good about the time, energy and emotion you currently put into engaging the United States political process? If so, why? If not, what needs to change?
- How might you model holding deep convictions in a generous way with family, friends and your congregation throughout election season?
- As you pledge allegiance to the kingdom of God, how might you leverage your vote for someone you know on the underside of power?

3. THREE NEXT STEPS

1. Read:

- Book: *Myth of a Christian Nation* by Greg Boyd
 - Deeper reading: *God of the Oppressed* by James Cone
- Article: *Politics of the Church in the World* by Tommy Givens
 - Deeper reading: [*Letter from a Birmingham Jail*](#) by Martin Luther King Jr.

2. Interrogate Your Allegiance: A Guide to SEEING and IMMERSING How We Experience Faith and US Citizenship

- *Using the following three questions as a guide, reflect on the historical events individually or with your community:*
 - How did it feel?
 - What did Christian faithfulness look like and how was it formed in you leading up to this event?
 - Did Christian faithless require you to endorse, critique or resist this?
- *Historical Events*
 - Saying the Pledge of Allegiance growing up
 - September 11th, 2001
 - Shock and Awe Bombing of Iraq
 - Execution of Osama Bin Laden
 - Experience of President Obama's Election
 - Experience of President Trump's Election
- *Christian Faithfulness and US Citizenship*
 - What do I believe is true about this relationship?
 - How might the values of the Empire conflict with the values of the Kingdom?
 - Where might my allegiance to the kingdom and participation in the US system be compatible?

3. Continue the Journey in Community

- Share and/or watch this video with your family, friends and church community
- Open up honest conversations about the 2020 Election in ways that elevate the values of the kingdom and those on underside of power
- Join us for a series of Webinars and Virtual workshops leading up to Election Night, 2020