

Message Notes
"Politics Saves!"

SERMON SERIES
The Waters in which we Swim

What this dogma believes:
*Politics will save us...
if we get the right politicians
elected.*

Governance is different than
politics

The misnomer of "Common
Sense"

1/3, 1/3, 1/3

Matthew 22:15-22

The attempt to trap Jesus

Who are the Pharisees and
Herodians?

The trap is set

Jesus avoids the trap and in-
stead traps his listeners

Jesus rejects political primacy,
complacency, polarity, and sim-
plicity

A Venn Diagram which could
help

APPLICATION

How can and should we respond?

Scripture Passages
(taken from the New International Version)

Matthew 22:15-22

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John 17:15-18

15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

1 Samuel 7:3-4

3 So Samuel said to all the Israelites, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." 4 So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only.

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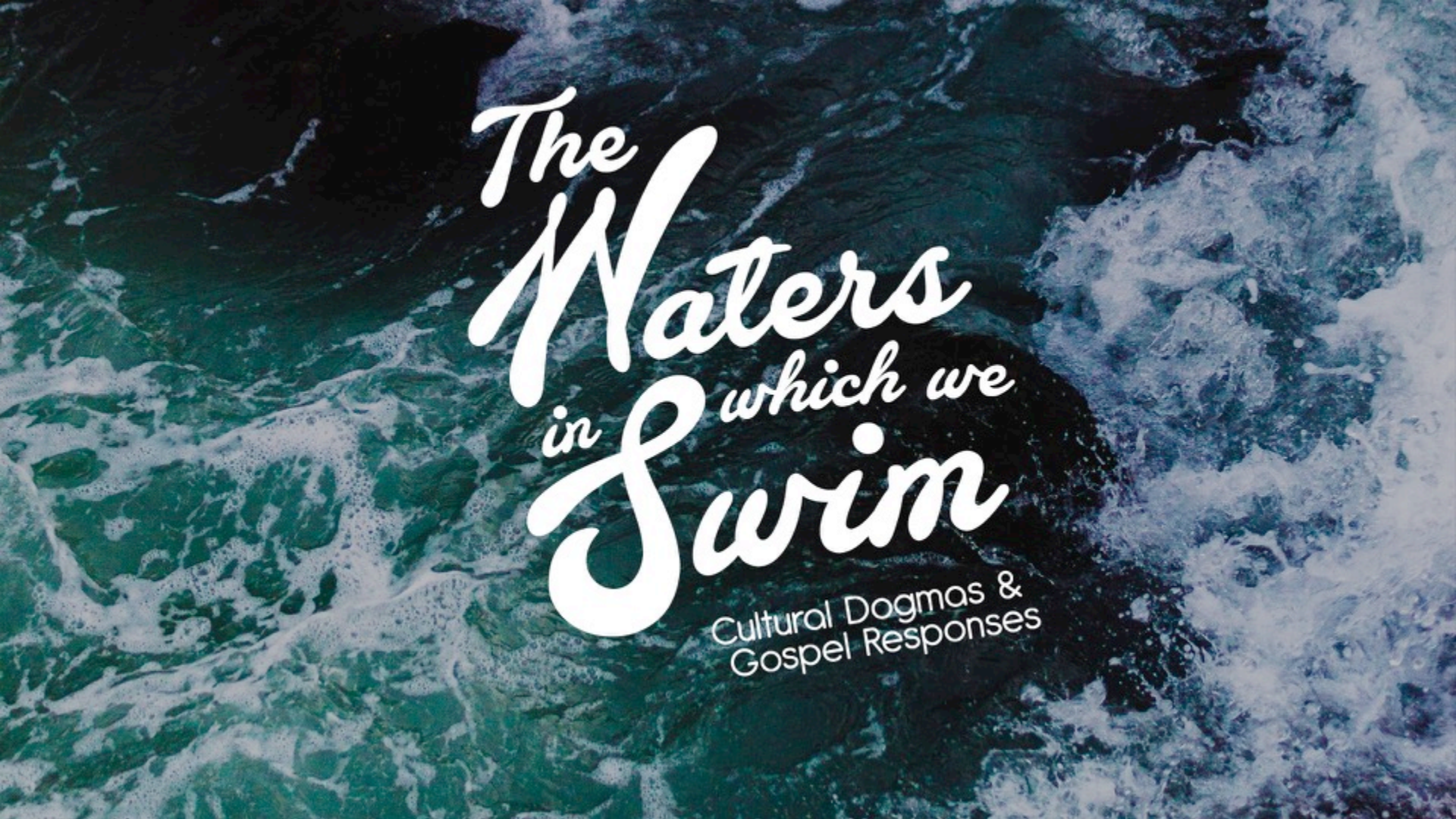
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An aerial photograph of ocean waves crashing over a large, dark, rounded rock. The water is a mix of deep blue and green, with white foam from the breaking waves. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, elegant script font.

The
Waters
in which we
Swim

Cultural Dogmas &
Gospel Responses

Kate

Emily

Brendan

Sam

Chaz

Naty

HCC elders

Steve

Nolan

Dan

Bryan

Brooke

Ben

Drew

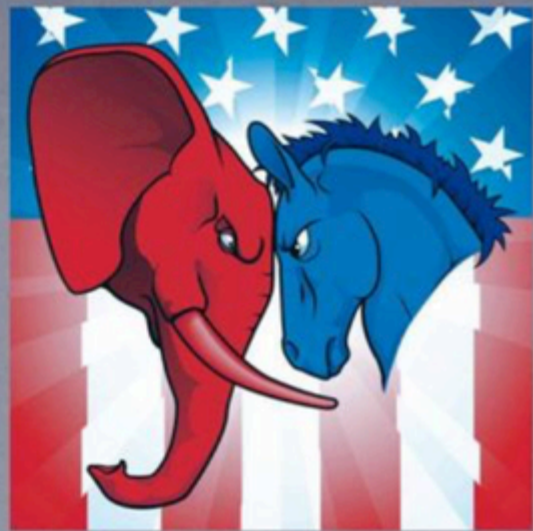
Caleb

Olivia

The Cultural Dogma: Politics saves

Politics will save us...

if we get the right politicians elected.



Government vs. Politics

If you're feeling lost, you're not alone. Nearly half of Americans on both sides of the political spectrum [feel like strangers in their own country](#), according to results from [polling by The Times](#).



Stephen Kinsella ✓

@stephenkinsella



"Siri, describe 2018 in one tweet please"

Tim Grierson @TimGrierson

Being angry all the time is exhausting and corrosive. Not being angry feels morally irresponsible.

In these conditions, democracy devolves into a zero-sum competition, one in which parties succeed by stoking voters' fears and appealing to their ugliest us-versus-them instincts. Americans on both the left and the right now view their political opponents not as fellow Americans with differing views, but as enemies to be vanquished.

The Atlantic, The Threat of Tribalism, October 2018,
by Amy Chu and Jed Rubenfeld





Second Edition

MORAL POLITICS

HOW LIBERALS
AND CONSERVATIVES THINK

GEORGE LAKOFF

Contemporary American politics is about worldview. Conservatives simply see the world differently than do liberals, and both often have a difficult time understanding accurately what the other's worldview is. As a student of the mind and of language, I think we can make much better sense than has been made of the worldviews and forms of discourse of conservatives and liberals.

I work in a discipline that studies how people conceptualize the world. It is called cognitive science, which is the interdisciplinary study of the mind. It is a broad discipline, covering everything from vision, memory, and attention to everyday reasoning and language. The subfield most concerned with issues of worldview, that is, with everyday conceptualization, reasoning, and language, is cognitive linguistics. I have been a cognitive linguist virtually from the birth of the field, and it is my profession to study how we conceptualize our everyday lives and how we think and talk about them. The study of political concepts and political discourse falls under the job description of those in my field, though until now research in the area has been relatively sparse.

A few words about my profession might be useful at the outset. One of the things most studied in cognitive science is common sense. Common sense cannot be taken for granted as a given. Whenever a cognitive scientist hears the words “It’s just common sense,” his ears perk up and he knows there’s something to be studied in detail and depth—something that needs to be understood. Nothing is “just” common sense. Common sense has a conceptual structure that is usually unconscious. That’s what makes it “common sense.” It is the commonsensical quality of political discourse that makes it imperative that we study it. I hope that you will see by the end of this book just how deep, complex, sophisticated, and subtle common sense is, especially in the domains of morality and politics.

Political ideology among adults in the Minneapolis metro area

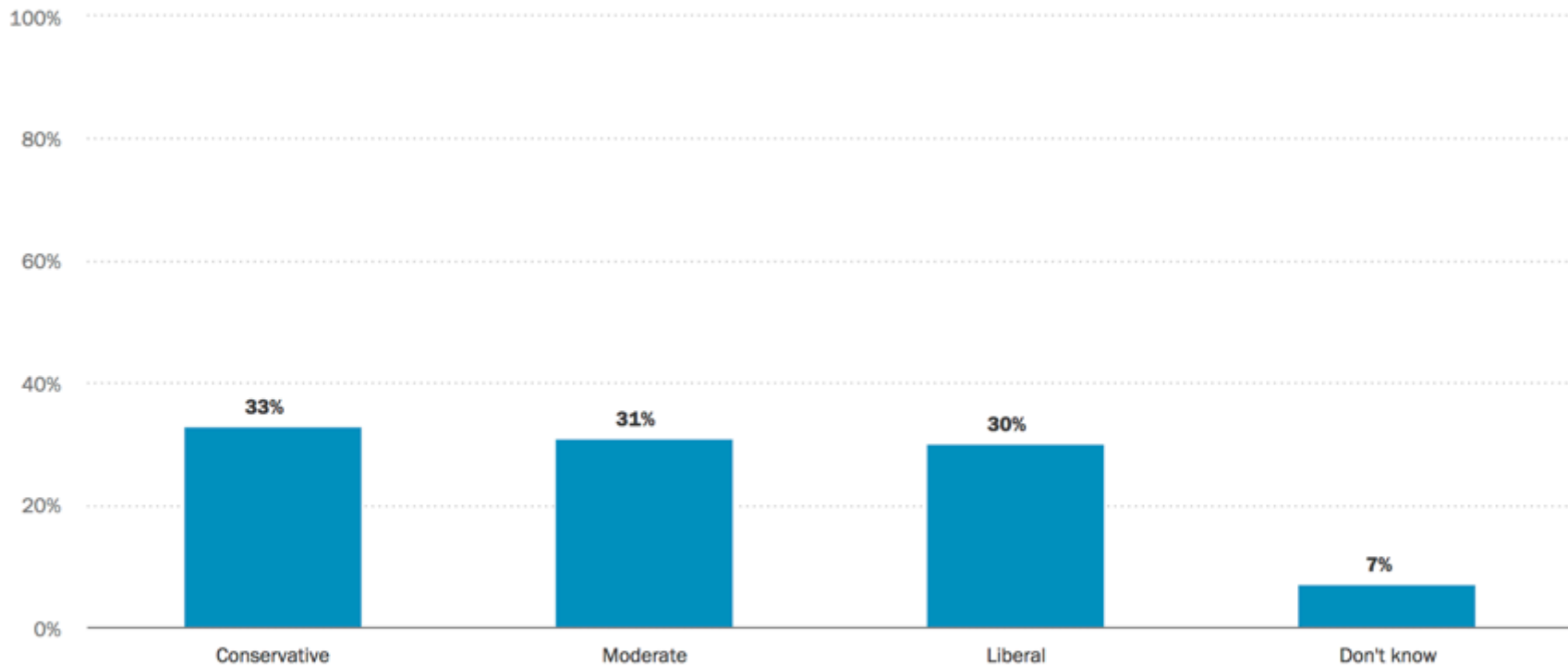
% of adults in the Minneapolis metro area who are...

Chart

Table

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Sample size = 342. Visit [this table](#) to see approximate margins of error for a group of a given size. For full question wording, see the [survey questionnaire](#).



Matthew 22:15-22

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Religious leaders attempt to trap Jesus

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What is the trap?

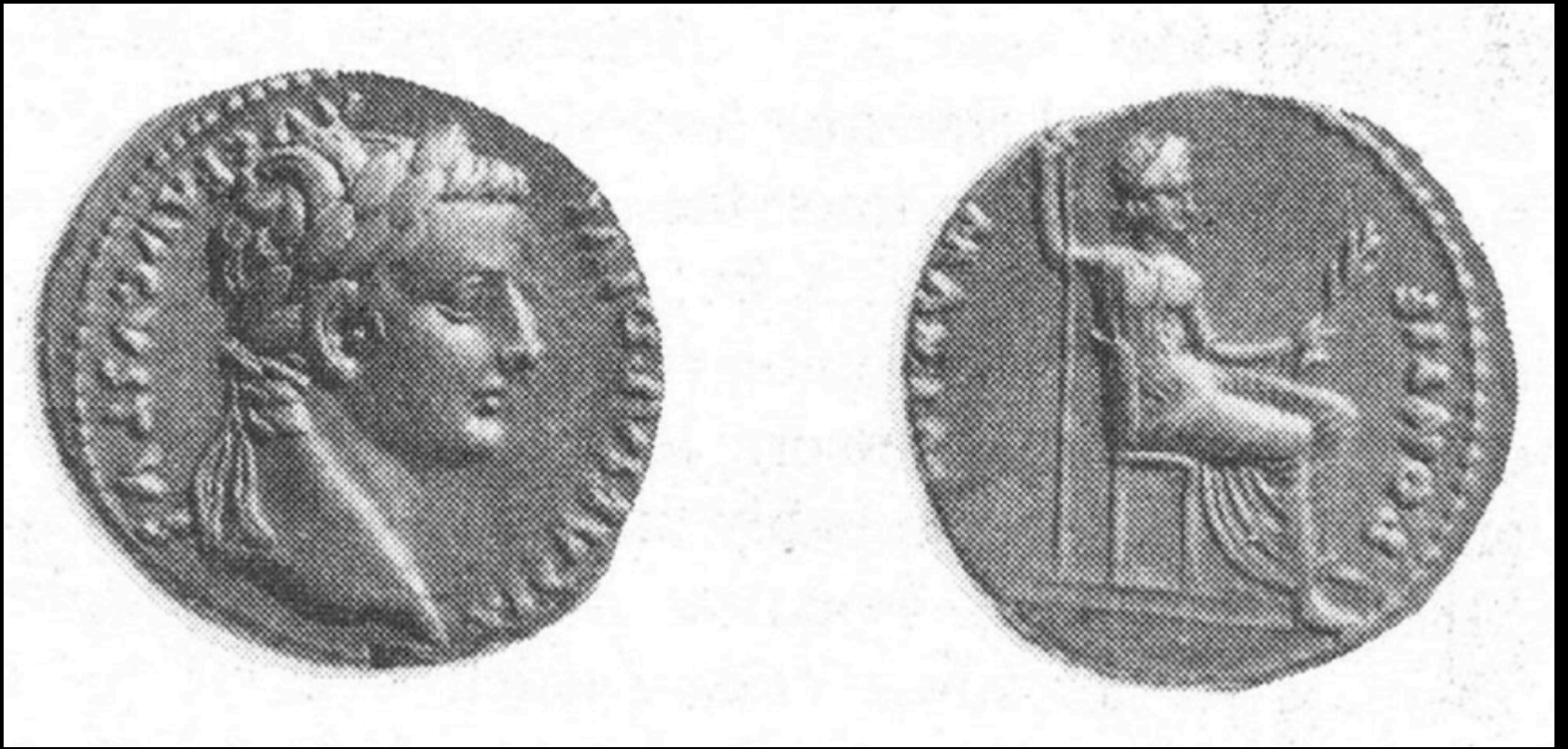
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How Jesus evades their trap and sets his own

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Silver denarius of Tiberius. Head of Tiberius with Lat. inscription
“Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus” (cf. Matt. 22:19–21)

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Jesus rejects political primacy

“ You can't legislate morality.

Naty Severson, Director of Small Groups,
Columbia Heights School Board



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Jesus rejects political polarity

It is the radically different interpretive strategies prescribed by the friend/foe distinction that explains how it is that we can draw such sharp lines in the face of a relatively smooth continuum of possible positions. Consider: on any political or theological question, there are generally a vast range of possible positions that could coherently be taken, which might be mapped on a relatively smooth spectrum from “most liberal” to “most conservative.” But most of us eschew the complexity of this mapping, with all the ifs, ands, and buts that it requires, and gravitate toward the simpler heuristic of the friend/foe distinction to divide up the possible positions into two main camps...

Having done so, and having adopted opposing strategies toward those on either side of the dividing line, we find that there is now a yawning chasm where once there was a fairly smooth continuum. Those on the “foe” side of the chasm, although on paper their positions may differ only slightly from those a bit closer to us, are perceived to differ categorically and perhaps irredeemably. Toward the one group we apply a hermeneutic of charity, assuming they must mean well even when they argue poorly; toward the other a hermeneutic of suspicion, discerning that some evil scheme lies cloaked under their fair words.

Brad Littlejohn, President of The Davenant Institute,
and Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Theory at Patrick Henry College

<https://bradlittlejohn.com/2018/08/07/revoice-the-culture-war-and-the-friend-enemy-distinction/>

How Jesus evades their trap and sets his own

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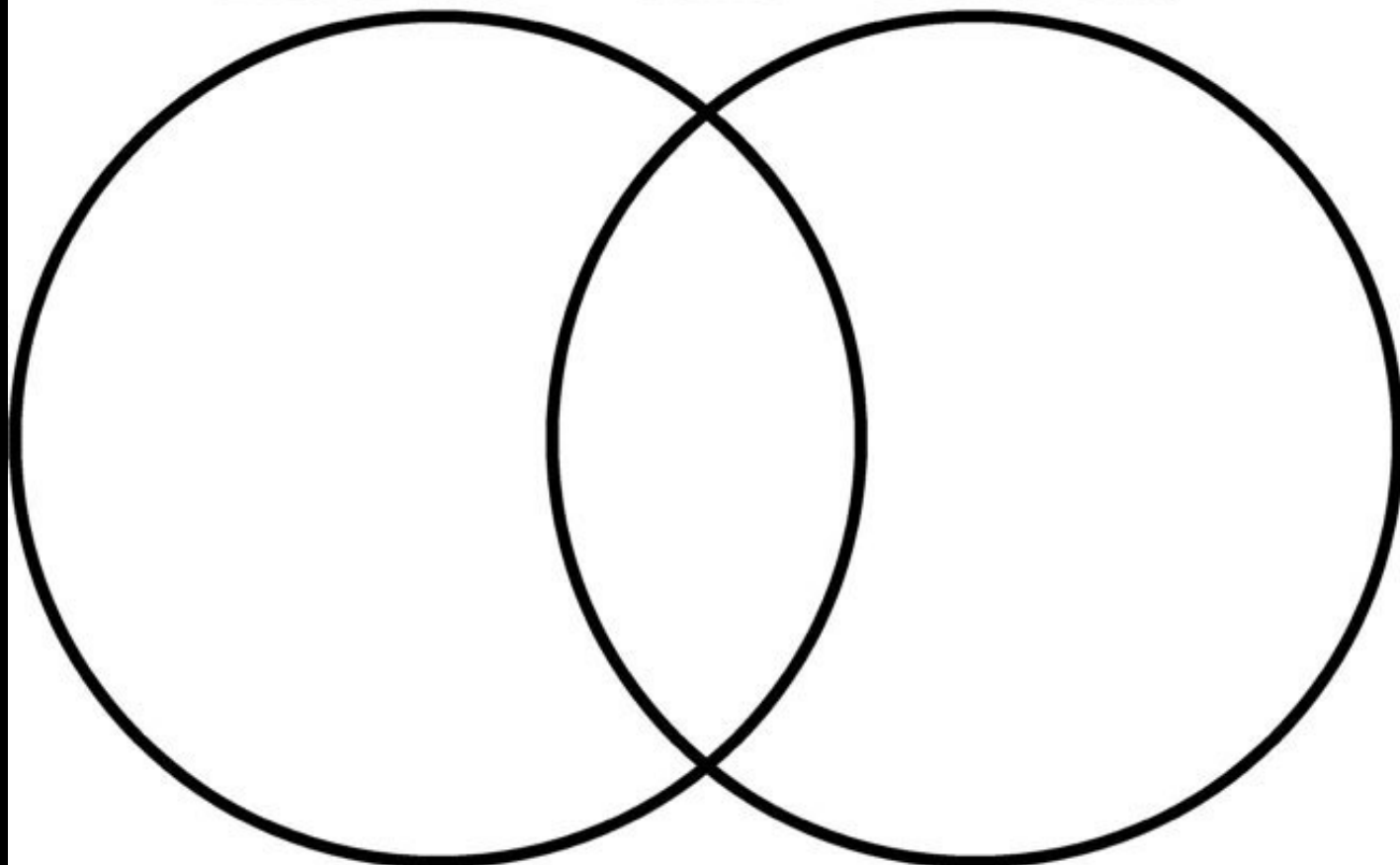
Jesus rejects political simplicity

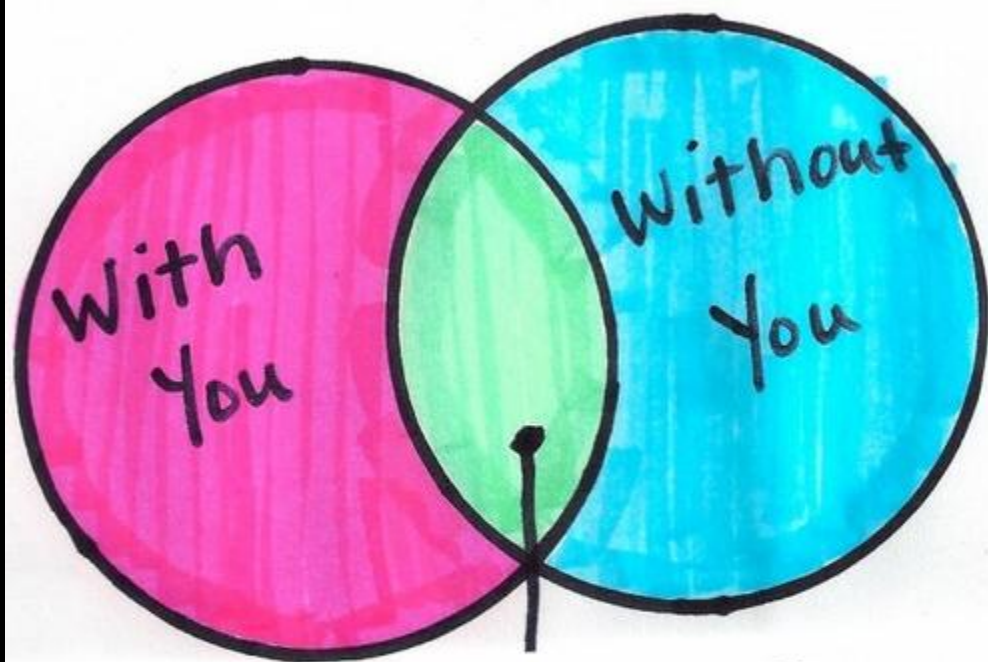
VENN DIAGRAM

Different

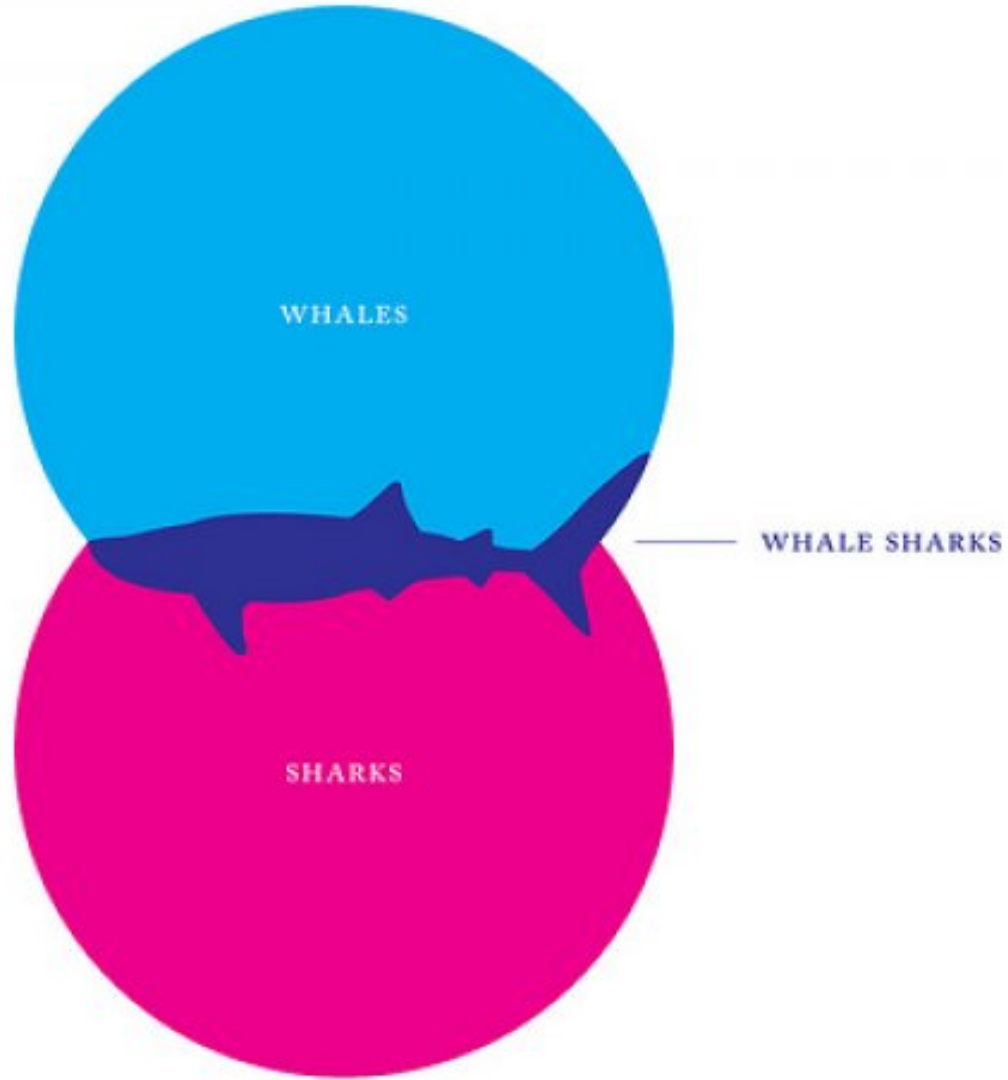
Same

Different



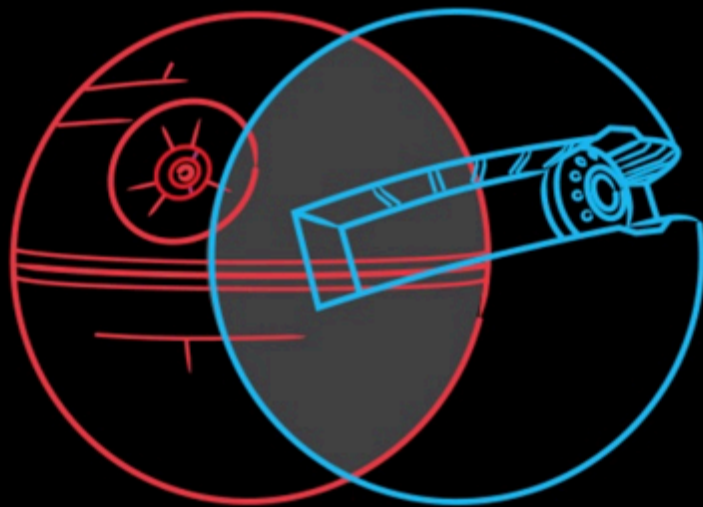


Place where Bono
can't live



Star Wars Venn Diagram

plot points from
the original trilogy



plot points from
The Force Awakens

How can we respond?

How should we respond?

Jesus rejects political primacy, complacency,
polarity, and simplicity

*How can I be involved in politics
without making it my God?*



Darren Carlson



November 7 at 8:57 AM · 🌐

So we are clear: 2020 will now be the most important election in our lifetime.



Matthew Taylor, Ed Lebert and 22 others

8 Comments



Like



Comment



Share

1 Samuel 7:3-4

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polarity, and simplicity

*How can I be involved in politics
without making it my God?*

Can you set it aside, at least for a season?

Jesus rejects political primacy, complacency,
polarity, and simplicity

*How can I respond without becoming pessimistic,
antagonistic, hopeless, defeated, or disengaged?*

To enter a culture, another main task is to discern its dominant worldviews or belief systems, because contextualized gospel ministry should affirm the beliefs of the culture wherever it can be done with integrity...Our criticism of the culture will have no power to persuade unless it is based on something that we can affirm in the beliefs and values of that culture.

~ Keller, Timothy. Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City. P. 123-124.



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polarity, and simplicity

*How can I respond without becoming pessimistic,
antagonistic, hopeless, defeated, or disengaged?*

*Will you see these political discussions as
opportunities rather than obstacles?*

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polarity, and simplicity

How can I have a voice without dividing people?

How can I lead a civil discourse?

In our political moment, those who think differently or vote differently are viewed as the enemy, someone to be beaten and shown to be wrong and misguided. But the gospel would say we are to love our neighbors, extend grace, be long suffering, and turn the other cheek. We as the church have a huge opportunity to model "gospel civility" (if that's a thing). To me that means intellectual humility, willingness to admit we don't know all the answers or how policies ought to work. That heart posture seems sorely lacking in our discourse and way of relating to others in this arena. We have a real chance to be counter-cultural for Jesus here.



Jesus rejects political primacy, complacency,
and simplicity

*How can I demonstrate the complexity of these
issues without being dismissed?*

**I'LL JUST SAY THE PARTIES
ARE EXACTLY THE SAME!**

ANCHOR PATRIOTS



**SAVES ME TIME FINDING OUT
WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON**

Plus, not voting will save me \$1 in gas

As I write, I am at the end of a week full of historic news headlines. Issues of race, gender, sexuality, religion, and politics have all erupted into chaos at the same time. Leaders have fallen, laws have been overturned, citizens have practiced civil disobedience, terrorism has inscribed its message in blood across three continents, and social media wants desperately to convince me that this time it is serious, the sky is really falling. I remember other weeks like this, the anxiety and alarm they bred in me, the gut-gripping fear... The raging of the nations can be navigated only by keeping a fixed point in view: the Lord God, seated on his throne... That fixed point has been my meditation this week for the sake of writing this book, and the effect it has had on my composure in the face of change and upheaval has taken me...

by surprise... There is no rock but the rock of our salvation. No human heart is so hard that he cannot soften it, not even yours... Ask him to sustain you through the ever-changing moments of this life. Ask him to change what you have believed to be beyond the power of his grace to alter. Our God of infinite sameness is a rock. When all around is shifting sand, may we cry to him: "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge" (Ps. 61:2).

~ Jen Wilkin, *None Like Him: 10 Ways God is Different From Us (and why that's a good thing)*, p. 90-91.

