



INTRO

It seems impossible to have reasonable dialogue in today's political landscape. But can our teens step up and break the cycle of division they've seen in their parents' generation? Maybe Tim McGraw's country song, "Always be humble and kind," should be our temporary National Anthem. The passages below, if applied by believers to their political interaction, could break the cycle.

Use these passages any way you see fit in your ministry: small group, large group, or simply over coffee. Ruminates on the instructions in these verses and apply them to today's political dialogue.

PERSPECTIVE**Luke 6:27-31**

²⁷ "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

INTERACTION**Colossians 3:9-14**

⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹ Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. ¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

ATTITUDE**1 Timothy 2:1-4**

¹ I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— ² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.



● TAKING IT INWARD

- After you've noted your teens' observations on the board, spend a few minutes processing the information by discussing these questions:

How would you describe people's attitude in general toward elected officials?

(note to leader: you may want to pick a level of elected officials to discuss, such as local, state or federal.)

How would you describe *your* attitude toward elected officials?

How would you describe the way God wants believers to act toward elected officials?

● PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

- Close your session by encouraging your teens to put some action steps to what the Bible has to say about how believers are to treat those who have authority over us.

Ask in your own words:

What can you do to follow through on the instructions you just saw in Scripture?

Give teens a minute to write their ideas on their student pages. Then ask for volunteers to share. If ideas are slow in coming here are a few to spark the creative juices:

1. Learn the names of all the representatives in the question that is part of the opening exercise for this session. Sign up for their newsletters or join their social network in order to track their take on issues.
2. Schedule a visit with your first-level representative (city council member, mayor, trustee, etc.) and ask about your community's biggest needs.
3. Offer to provide refreshments at the next city council meeting (enough for council members and community members attending the meeting).
4. Provide bottles of water or other refreshment at a few polling places in your community (contact your county board of elections for permission). Thank people for voting as you hand them a bottle of water.



DIGGING IN

Romans 13:6-7

⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Titus 3:1-2

¹ Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, ² to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

1 Peter 2:17

¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

**What do these verses teach us about
how we are to treat those who govern us?**

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Ideas for Action Steps