Footnotes: Talking Trump? + 12 Things about 12 Rules

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12 Things About 12 Rules for Life: Jordan Peterson, Again.

When we’re looking at the topics of this book, it comes through remembering that we are exiles and pilgrims in this world. We need some stability so immersed in this hotly contested election. Therefore, we needed the stability of political viewpoint. At this point, my preaching does not directly address any of the current political spectrum, in the way that the “manifold wisdom of God” has always included various political viewpoints. I am shaped profoundly by those more apolitical streams of our movement. My own perspective is that Christ unites members of the body of Christ. Politics is not central to that. It is not a central point of focus in my preaching.

The world has gotten too divided. Churches have got to come together. If you get into too many points about social topics, you just break people into at least two major camps, and I know there are members in both camps who are uncomfortable with each other. Trump’s comments and actions continue to raise the consciousness of thoughtful people. His research seems legitimate. I’m not sure I’m the best one to judge, but... I have not and do not intend to refer to Trump in any sermon I preach. He’s never a part of my preaching. I might have been tempted to say something about political matters had I not been a Christian or had I not been called to the ministry. This question comes up in some seminaries. There is a temptation, no matter your political ideology, to vocalize that you think the president is doing the right thing or the wrong thing. I think that statement has the currency it does precisely because of its explicit political nature does not come from within. That is, I’m not explicitly political. I just feel like this extra conversation wouldn’t make much sense. I think if your pastor doesn’t address some of these major events, someone will tweet something like, “if your pastor doesn’t address ________ in the sermon today’s most important topics, we turn over the formative responsibility of the church to the internet. We’re no longer the source of worldview formation. Unfortunately, when the pulpit is silent on these major events, churches are less effective in the challenges of the day. Talking Trump?—Bob Turner · 1000 Cherry · Memphis, TN 38117 · USA

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When I first came to serve this congregation, I asked one of the elders about the political differences among its members. He told me about one major split in the congregation. In fact, there were two major splits, one on the right and one on the left. The elders told me that each group wanted the other group to leave. But the people of the congregation realized they no longer had it either. So what I’m after in my preaching is that there is a biblical perspective toward these situations. The way the Bible addresses major events, such as tragedies, because people in the congregation are addressing them at their own peril. The congregation knows this. Some don’t have that luxury, and many more are watching in advance. Do you see your preaching as formative to the cause of the congregation? Do you think that the congregation is more or less formed by the preaching of the pastor? My own perspective is that Christ unites members of the body of Christ. Politics is not central to that. It is not a central point of focus in my preaching. It’s just in the way of life, not something central to my preaching.

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