



Discussion Guide

For the Health of the Nation

Introduction and Engagement

1. Read Romans 12:9–18. As Christians, how should we approach our engagement in the public square?
2. How can we faithfully approach issues in society that are not explicitly discussed in the Bible?
3. Disagreement on political issues and methods of engagement is common — even among believers. When that happens, how can we work together?
4. Read Romans 13:1–7. In what ways do you see government today being God’s servant?

Protecting Religious Freedom and Liberty of Conscience

1. The U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, laws and judicial rulings protect religious freedom for all Americans. However, some laws and court decisions have undermined this protection, particularly regarding the freedom of believers to live out their faith in society. How does “religious freedom” encompass more than just worship?
2. Read Matthew 13:24–30. What should be done when religious rights are in conflict with other rights and interests?
3. Despite our challenges, Americans enjoy far more religious freedom than do the citizens of many other countries. What can we do to promote greater religious freedom in other countries? Are there particular countries or situations that concern you?

Safeguarding the Nature and Sanctity of Human Life

1. Protecting the unborn has become highly politicized in our country. What public policies and private actions could reduce the number of abortions in the United States?
2. What other issues should concern Christians who want to support a consistent ethic of life from womb to tomb?
3. Read Psalm 139:13–16. How can we apply biblical truth to ethical challenges posed by advances in science that may undermine the sanctity of human life?

Strengthening Marriages, Families and Children

1. Read Genesis 1:27–28 and 2:18–25. What do these verses tell you about God’s design for marriage and families?
2. What are some of the challenges facing marriages and families today?
3. While it is not the government’s role to guarantee wholesome family life, public policies can hinder or promote healthy families. What are some laws or policies that could strengthen marriages and families?

Seeking Justice and Compassion for the Poor and Vulnerable

1. Read Psalm 113:5–9. God measures societies by how they treat the poor and vulnerable. What are some public policies that can help create a more just society with shared prosperity?
2. What role can churches and individuals play in caring for the poor and vulnerable?
3. While the world has made great strides in reducing extreme poverty and preventable deaths in recent decades, much

more can be done. How can we encourage elected leaders to prioritize poverty-focused aid that contributes to a safer, more prosperous world? What other public policies could increase opportunity for the world's poorest citizens?

Preserving Human Rights

1. Read Psalm 72:1–4, 12–14. In order to carry out their God-given responsibilities, people need basic freedoms and human rights. Make a list of human rights that you believe are particularly important. Which of these are currently well protected by our government? Which need more attention?
2. Many people around the world live under repressive governments that deny their basic human rights. What can be done to support greater freedom in these countries?
3. In light of sexual misconduct and abuse across many sectors of our society, how can we help foster environments of respect and protection in our churches, schools, businesses and homes?
4. What are the ways our criminal justice system could be reformed to more adequately protect our communities, uphold the rights of the accused, and rehabilitate offenders?

Pursuing Racial Justice and Reconciliation

1. What is the difference between racial justice and racial reconciliation? Why are both important?
2. What can be done to address both overt and systemic expressions of racism?
3. Read Ephesians 2:14–22. How can churches and individuals be part of the sustained work to combat racism?
4. What government policy changes are needed to promote racial justice and reconciliation?

Promoting Just Peace and Restraining Violence

1. Governments should work to protect and restore just and peaceful social orders. How can Christians encourage governments to settle disputes among nations peacefully?
2. How can the worldwide Body of Christ play a role in promoting cooperation and understanding between nations?
3. Read Psalm 33:16–17. Several nations continue to possess nuclear weapons that threaten devastating destruction of civilian populations. What are the ethical dilemmas posted by these and other weapons of mass destruction?

Caring for God's Creation

1. Read Genesis 2:15. Christians acknowledge creation care as an act of discipleship. In what ways are we called to take care of God's creation?
2. List some examples of how the government can work to conserve the environment to maintain clean air, pure water and adequate resources.
3. What environmental threats most concern you? What can be done about them?

Our Commitment

1. What are some ways you are called to fulfill your commitment to the health of our nation? Identify one specific action you will take within the next three months.
2. What are churches called to do to promote greater engagement of their members in advocacy for the health of the nation? Identify one specific action that you can recommend to the leaders of your church.
3. Read 1 Timothy 2:1–2. We are instructed to pray for our leaders even if we disagree with them. Write a prayer for your local, state and national leaders, and commit to pray for them. Let them know you are praying for them.