



It's election time, and so this question came up at confirmation class last week. It's a good question:

"Was Jesus a Republican or a Democrat"?

That one's easy to answer because neither of those two parties was around in Jesus' day.

But then came, **"What if Jesus were here today - would he be a Republican or Democrat?"**

That's an even better question, because it puts Jesus and his teachings into our setting today. Jesus taught things that both of those parties emphasize. And he spoke against things that both parties emphasize. But I think it would be safe to say that Jesus would be neither a Republican or Democrat, because he did not come to be a political leader or to set public policy. Rather, Jesus came to establish an eternal kingdom that does not rely on taxes or votes or public opinion polls. Jesus came to show people the policies to follow in their everyday lives as citizens of whatever government was in power - God's policies.

Jesus did not align himself with any of the "political" parties in his day - the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Zealots or the Essenes. That doesn't make him and "Independent" either. It does make him more concerned about our relationship with God and each other than about who is ruling us. No matter who rules us in government, Jesus taught that each of us should follow two simple principles in our lives: Love God above all things. Love your neighbor as yourself. And because we don't do those things perfectly - or even come close - he went to the cross to serve the sentence for our sin.

This is not to say that who we elect is not important to God. In a society where we are free to elect people to represent us, it is our duty as Christians to exercise our right to vote and to seek God's guidance in our election decisions, just as we should do for all of our other decisions. But more important is how we conduct our lives - no matter who governs us - and to pray for our leaders to be guided by God's Spirit and have the courage to lead us in the way that God guides

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net