



Q & A

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### ***Faithful Politics***

Ten Approaches to Christian Citizenship and Why It Matters

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**Miranda Zapor Cruz** is professor of historical theology at Indiana Wesleyan University. She holds a PhD in religion, politics, and society from Baylor University's J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies and an MDiv from Princeton Theological Seminary.

## Engaging Politics as Faithful Christians

**What led to your interest in and now sharing about political participation and Christianity?**

**Miranda Zapor Cruz:** My motivation is to equip Christians to think carefully and faithfully about our approaches to politics and the ways we engage with people who come to different conclusions. My students' questions about how to think about and participate in contentious political contexts drove me to write a response. I am addressing the need for Christians to have frameworks for carefully considering the ways we participate in politics, beyond simplistic party alignments.

**What is your main thesis in *Faithful Politics*?**

**Cruz:** The United States is not, has never been, and will not become the kingdom of God. Therefore, no single political party or ideology is entirely compatible with Christian convictions. Thus, Christians who are faithfully following Christ will come to different conclusions about political participation and different positions on divisive issues. We can understand and respect our differences, while adding salt (flavor, preservative) to the political process.

My approach is strictly nonpartisan and integrates Christian history, theology, and biblical interpretation to explore different faithful approaches to politics. It is academic, while being accessible and written with laypeople in mind.

**Who did you have in mind as you were writing this book?**

**Cruz:** Christian adults who are politically engaged (or politically confused) and want to think critically about politics, especially during election years. The book is well-suited to church book discussion groups and to college courses on faith and politics.

**What do you hope your book contributes to the study of Christianity and politics?**

**Cruz:** I outline approaches to political engagement to a degree that no other book does. It goes far beyond "four views" type books, while also being more specific than books that urge unity in Christ or simply lament divisiveness.

The chapters examine the historical roots of each of the ten approaches, rooting the present in the past in a way that allows us to learn from the Christians who've gone before. This makes it useful and instructive for political science and church history, among other disciplines.

The book helps the reader think carefully and critically about her own political convictions and choices, and it gives a framework for options he might not have considered.



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Karin DeHaven, academic publicist  
kdehaven@ivpress.com or ivpress.com/media

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