

# The Waters We Swim In

## GETTING STARTED

We get so used to the world we live in. Day in, day out; we breathe in its air and swim in its waters. But like the proverbial frog in the pot, rarely do we think about the temperature of what we are swimming in.

The world invites us to swim in its waters, but the Gospel calls us to live lives that are distinctly different from the world around us. Different in values; different in beliefs; different in who we serve and what we love.

In this series, we will examine 6 cultural norms that the world invites us to embrace in contrast to the Gospel realities that Jesus calls us to embody.

## KEYS TO A GREAT DISCUSSION:

**\*Best Practice Suggestions: Reading the following "Guardrails" will help your conversations stay on track.**

**Guardrail #1:** Show Grace- Believe it or not, topics such as race, politics, and gender can be challenging for everyone. Give each other grace and the benefit of the doubt—it will go a long way. Embrace discomfort as an opportunity for growth, acknowledging that challenging conversations can lead to deeper understanding and connection.

**Guardrail #2:** Practice Respect- Respect confidentiality within the group, ensuring that what is shared remains within the confines of the discussion.

**Guardrail #3:** Have a Posture of Humility is a chance for us to understand culture, how it influences us, and how we can live in this world in a faithful way. It has much more to do with us and our response to the "waters we swim in" than it does with critiquing society. In short, "work on you."

**Guardrail #4:** Go to Scripture-Scripture is the Word of God. It is powerful, living, and the final and ultimate authority. Refer to it often, trust in it in all areas, and seek to apply it to your life.

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Read the following Scriptures together and then use the questions below (or any you wish to add) to discuss the text and unpack its meaning.



Have someone in your group read **Psalm 146: 1-10**

- What stands out to you about this passage?
- The Psalms are poems that aim to make us feel as well as understand. When you read this Psalm, think about how it makes you feel about God, your life, and the world.
- What does it tell us about the character of God?
- What specific reasons for praise and thanksgiving are mentioned in Psalm 146?
- How does the Psalmist's emphasis have an 'upward focus' rather than an 'outward focus'?

## GETTING PRACTICAL

1. We wanted to have some intentional conversations around politics this week. How does this passage inform your understanding of the Christians view of politics and government leadership?
2. Considering today's scripture how should a Christian engage in politics, voting, and government?
3. In the current climate of intense political division, how can we model a 'Gospel Civility'?"