



## 04. Thinking Biblically: Loving Your Neighbor Amidst The Events of 2020 Jeff Norris | Randy Pope

In this episode of *Thinking Biblically*, Jeff Norris sits down with former lead pastor, Randy Pope, to talk about the major events of 2020. From a controversial presidential election to social unrest to a global pandemic, the men try to glean wisdom from the scripture and help give insight and perspective on these cultural issues that have many Christians on opposite sides of the argument, by providing biblical application and wisdom.

### Noteworthy Quotes:

*We would say there are certain times where, yeah, of course, things that are being talked about politically that are so clearly identified in scripture, we're going to preach that because it's the Word of God and it's very clear in the Word of God. However, as it comes to, as you (Pope) said, endorsing candidates' platforms, whatever it may be, that's the role of the individual citizen of heaven, who happens to be a citizen of America who is being led by the scriptures as he's being trained and equipped in the scriptures by his or her church.* -Jeff Norris

*Two of Jesus' 12 could not have been on further ends of the spectrum politically. On one end, you've got Matthew, the tax collector who was faithful to Rome and seen as a traitor by those Jews in Israel. Then on the other end, on the farthest end possible, you've got Simon, the zealot who has devoted his entire life to fight and protest against the authority of Rome over them, over the Jews. And, it's not by mistake that Jesus sovereign as He is, He says, "I'm going to take these two on total opposite ends of the political spectrum. And I'm going to draw them into a new kingdom to teach them a new way to unite them, not based on political alignment, but based on the kingdom of Jesus."*  
-Jeff Norris

*I definitely think we better be careful about bringing the political agenda into the life of the church. It will erode the foundation of the church. It will erode it. And for sure what God says is most important, won't become most important. It's like we have issues that touch us so emotionally that it can sometimes flip us from our balance of the Christian faith.* -Randy Pope

*There's something unique, different and totally set apart about the kingdom of God and how we love and how we view other people, even our enemies. I mean, Jesus saying, pray for your enemies. Those who persecute you.* -Jeff Norris

*Why wouldn't we as a Christian church say, love is the highest commandment of all, right? And go, let's do that. Let's love. What does it mean to love somebody about a mask it's to accept what they're doing and so forth.* -Randy Pope

*We've got to come to the place to say there is a church that I am a part of and that church has a responsibility. "I'm going to pray for them. I'm going to encourage them. And I'm going to, I'm going to encourage them to change if I don't like where they are, I'll be." But in a gracious way, I'll encourage nothing wrong with that. I always welcome that.*  
-Randy Pope

*He (Jesus) preached and He healed. It was word and deed. And the word was really focused on giving them the truth about who He was, and that's what we're to do about Him. And our healing is serving. We serve people and we love, you know, the hurting and we do whatever we can do for them. That's got to be our focus.* -Randy Pope

*So when I see a church, if it gets away from the primary thing, being, making, and training disciples, and this is why this is so important, because when you focus on that and you really do make Christians out of non-Christians, their worldview is going to change, which way is it going to change toward the things of God, you take a new Christian and you begin to train them as a Christian, what happens? They begin to think God's thoughts. And then all those other things can now be embraced by a larger kingdom. That's impressing the next kingdom on this earth or the kingdom on this earth.*  
-Randy Pope

*I sense that is what God's doing again here as we are experiencing hardship, we're experiencing trials and tribulation. I think some years ahead of us are going to be profound in terms of what God's going to stir up within the Church, out of a season like this, He's done it so many times before when the Church is panicking and He says, "Just trust Me, I'm sovereignly working something that, you know, you're going to be amazed at." -Jeff Norris*

*The truth of it is this is a broken world. It's going to always be pain-ridden. If we got to figure out how to live without pain, forget it. But once we began to say that's to be expected because God uses pain to bring what we need. He uses this in our lives and we know that as Christians, what does He use? Good, good experiences and everything positive or no, we go, no, He uses pain and suffering and trials and tribulation and all that.* -Randy Pope

#### Scripture References

[1 Peter 4](#)

[Philippians 2](#)

[Romans 14](#)

#### Additional Resources:

*The Church at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* by Francis Schaeffer