When we lived in San Antonio there were signs on the back of construction vehicles which read, “Do not follow into construction zone.” And the reason that they were there is because obviously someone had done it – some minivan or hatchback had happily followed a cement truck into the basement of a soon to be Walmart. And because they went to all the trouble to stencil it on the back of so many vehicles, I would assume that it was not just one person who had made this mistake, but rather a whole bunch. Which brings us to one of the rules of life which is when you hear or read something that tells you not to do something stupid it is because quite a few people did something stupid. And I think that is exactly why we have what we have from Isaiah today where we hear among other things, “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.” I know at times I have wondered why God spends so much time in the Bible reminding us that he is God and I think it is because a lot of people have, at some time or another, followed some other god into the construction zone. And the issue for us is not that we show up at the temple of Zeus on Sunday morning it is rather that the God who is described here in Isaiah gets assigned a support role in our lives. There is the old story about the vestry that finishes their meeting and then prays that God will bless all of the decisions that they have just made. That I think is most of our problem, we act as Captain Picard, we make a decision and then ask God to, “Make it so.” And it is because of this that God comes along to remind us rather frequently how things are ordered.

I know that I have been talking about politics a lot lately and I want to bring it up again but promise this will be my last time for a while. And here is the reason. I think Christians have lost their talking politics privileges because when we bring God into politics, we have it so backwards. We arrive at our political beliefs and then go and find parts of the Bible that support those beliefs. And if you wonder how I know this happens it is because you can pick any side of a random political debate and you can find a Christian who will say that this position is also God’s position. I mean take something like President Trump. You can find Christians who believe he is an instrument of God, going as far as to compare him to King David. You can also find Christin who believe that President Trump is antithetical to everything that we as Christians are supposed to believe. Which if you go back to your logic classes means that someone has to be wrong and I would argue that it is in most cases both sides are at least a little wrong. C.S. Lewis in his book *Mere Christianity* had a section where he takes a stab at explaining what a truly Christian government would look like. I don’t remember much of the specifics, but I remember him saying that everyone would find something in it that they would not like. And I think that is true. A society ordained by God will be different than a society ordained by us because God will be at the center. And so, when that happens, we are probably not going to like everything, because we are sinful creatures and we really enjoy certain sins. A God ordered world is going to go against some of our wishes and desires.

And so here is my manifesto for today: Christians need to stay off of politics until God has to stop putting up signs that say remember I am before all things. And some may object to this sentiment and say but politics is too important to put on the shelf to which the reply is, “Is it more important than God?” Because if we are making God subservient to our political beliefs this is what we are saying. And this is much of the reason the Christian Church has such a confused witness these days. Name a belief and you can probably find a church or clergyman who will tell you that it is God’s view too. Christians have lost their right to make pronouncements about the world because we have forgotten to put God first. We have made up our minds and then do a little eisegesis and discover that God thinks exactly the way we do. But that is not what God asks. God asks us to seek first his kingdom. So, let’s start there. Let’s try and go a few months where God does not have to remind us that there is no other rock but him. Let’s take some time and get our priorities straight before we start telling other people what God thinks. If God spends so much time reminding us to put him first it probably behooves us to do just that so that we may be his both now and forevermore.