

Christian Public Witness in an Age of **PARTISANSHIP**



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POLITICS: the art or science of government;
also: the total complex of relations between
people living in society

PARTISANSHIP: strong and sometimes
blind adherence to a particular party, faction,
cause, or person



DISCUSSION

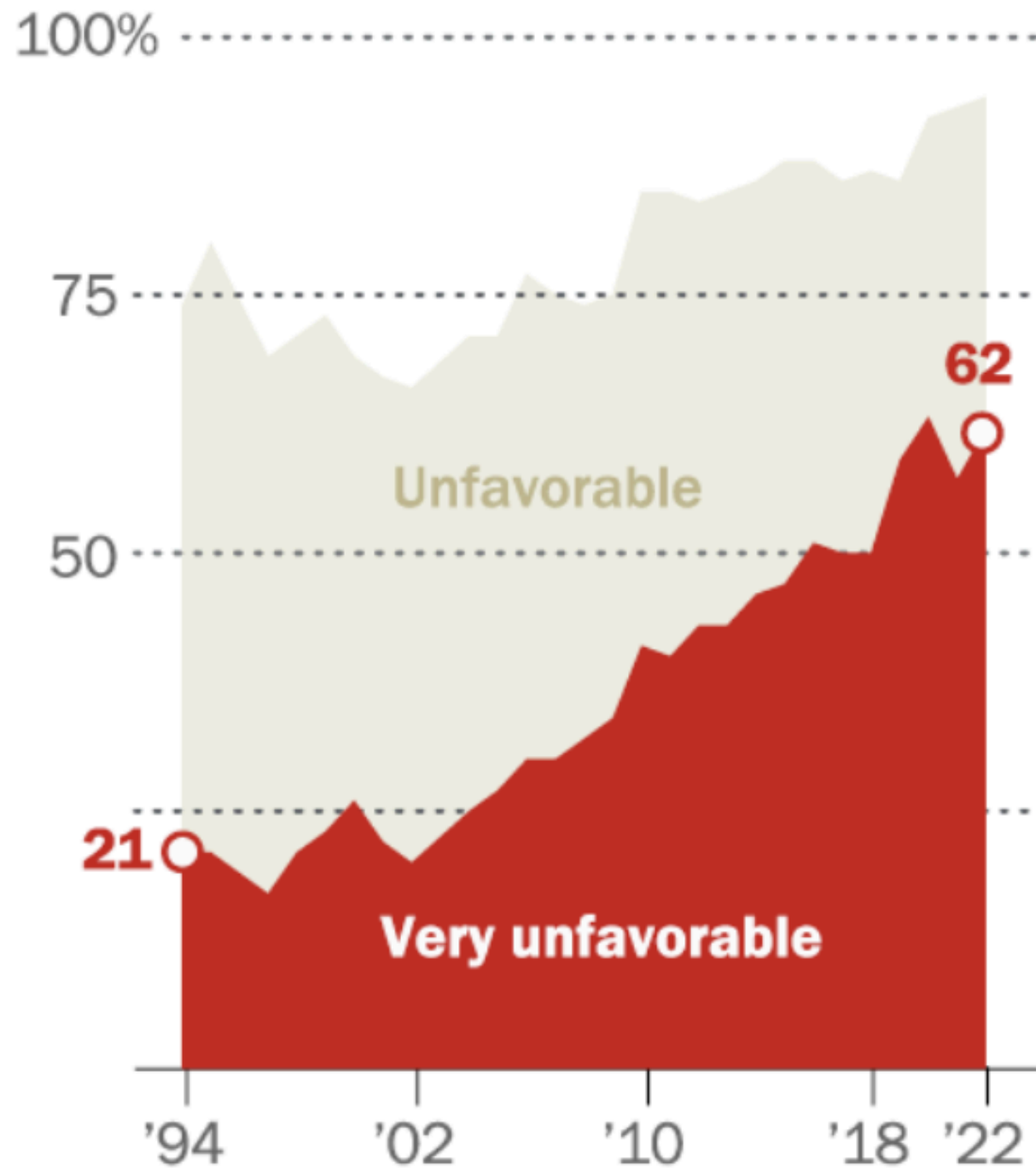
1. How is partisanship impacting you and your community?

2. What topics feel difficult to discuss?

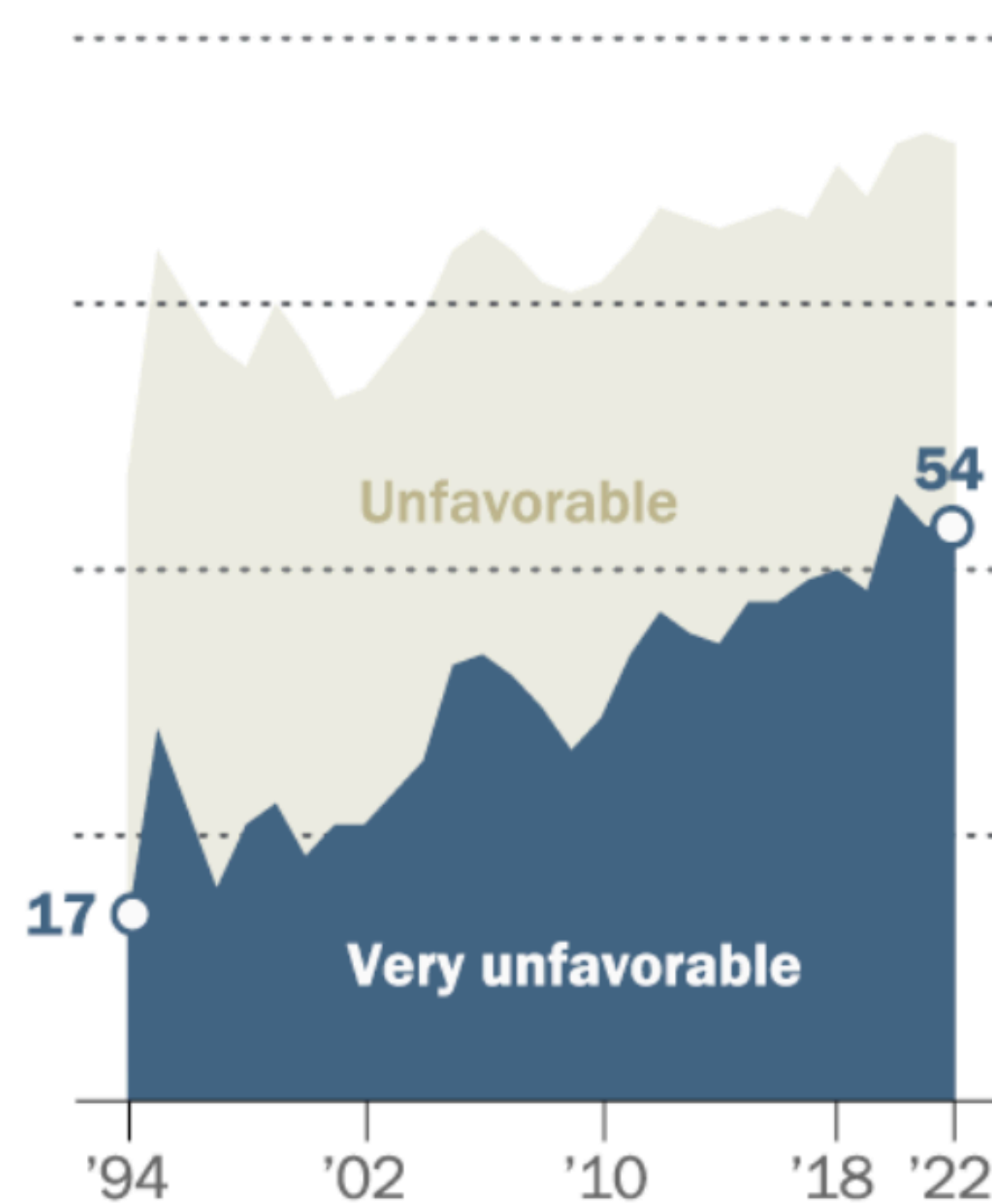
3. What values are at stake for you?

Two decades of rising partisan antipathy

% of *Republicans* with a(n) ____ view
of the *Democratic Party*



% of *Democrats* with a(n) ____
view of the *Republican Party*



Note: Based on partisans and does not include those who lean to each party.

Source: Yearly averages of survey data from Pew Research Center American Trends Panel (2020-2022) and Pew Research Center phone surveys (1994-2019).

FACTORS IMPACTING PARTISANSHIP TODAY

ISOLATION

NATIONALIZATION OF
POLITICS

DECLINING SOCIAL TRUST

SILOS

PREDOMINANT NARRATIVES



DISCUSSION

Do you trust the people in your community?

How does media influence your views of others?

When have you changed your views about someone?

WHAT DO SCRIPTURE AND OUR TRADITIONS SAY ABOUT THIS?



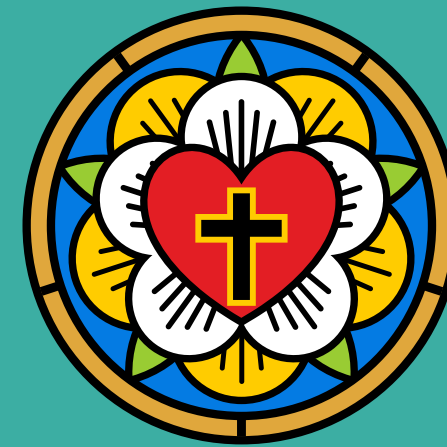
Jesus:
show mercy
amid
difference



Apostles:
God shows up
in surprising
places



Epistles:
Watch your
tongue &
love others



Martin
Luther
On the 8th
Commandment



ELCA
Statement on
Faith and
Civic Life



DISCUSSION

What faith practices help you love your different neighbors?

What does “go and do likewise” mean for us today?

How can you “interpret your neighbor’s action in the best possible light”?

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR CHRISTIAN PUBLIC WITNESS

Our communities, families, and churches need us to lead the way!



- CHANGE HOW YOU TALK
- START CLOSE TO HOME
- CONNECT WITH YOUR VALUES
- ENGAGE LOCALLY
- PRIORITIZE REAL LIFE
- NURTURE CURIOSITY

LET'S PRACTICE!

OPTION 1:

Imagine having a difficult conversation. Share why you want to talk about this difficult topic. What values are at stake for you?

OPTION 2:

Share one change you will make in your media consumption or community participation going forward.

OPTION 3:

When have you had a meaningful conversation with someone you disagree with? What made it a positive interaction? How could you bring that into other conversations?



RESOURCES



TANGLE

readtangle.com

THE MIDDLE
with
JEREMY
HOBSON

listentothemiddle.com

BRAVER
ANGELS

braverangels.org

PLAIN TALK

[youtube.com/
@PlainTalkND](https://youtube.com/@PlainTalkND)

Thank you
FOR YOUR PUBLIC WITNESS



IT REALLY MATTERS!!!!