

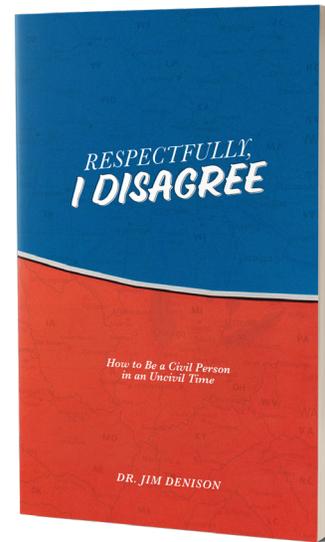
RESPECTFULLY, I DISAGREE: A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR CIVIL PEOPLE

The following discussion questions are based on the six chapters of *Respectfully, I Disagree: How to Be a Civil Person in an Uncivil Time* by Dr. Jim Denison. Copies of this book may be requested at DenisonForum.org/books.

These questions are intended for use in a small group, but they may prove helpful for individual study as well.

CHAPTER 1: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

1. Define civility in your own words. Identify a few well-known people whom you would describe as civil.
2. Why is it particularly important for Christians to be civil people?
3. How would you rate America today from the perspective of biblical morality?
4. What three cultural metanarratives are mentioned in Chapter 1? How have you seen each of these metanarratives play out in American culture? Compare and contrast how the cultural acceptance of these metanarratives has changed from when you were younger.



11. After reading this chapter, how would you rate your own level of civility—especially with those who disagree with you? Where do you need to seek God’s help in being more civil with others? How can you model civility for those around you?

CHAPTER 2: IS AMERICA A CHRISTIAN NATION?

1. With regard to practiced religions in your city, how have its demographics changed within the last fifty years? The last five years?
2. How have changes in your local religious demographics changed your church? Changed you?
3. What were you taught about the spiritual foundation of America?
4. Do you believe America is a “Christian nation” today? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 4: PRACTICE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

1. Why do we as Christians—who believe that we cannot earn our salvation—engage in spiritual disciplines like prayer and worship?
2. What were you taught about prayer growing up? Do you feel as if your prayer life is effective today? Why or why not?
3. What do you think about meditation in the context of spiritual disciplines? Have you ever meditated on God? Is meditation currently part of your spiritual disciplines? What is the purpose of such meditation?
4. How often do you set aside time to get alone with God? Why is such separation necessary to spiritual health? How did Jesus model this for us?
5. What were you taught about fasting? Is fasting a regular part of your spiritual diet? If you have fasted before, what happened as a result?

11. Is it necessary for a Christian to pursue each of the spiritual disciples listed in this chapter? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 5: HOW TO CHANGE THE CULTURE

1. What is “the mustard-seed movement”? Name a few biblical examples of this movement. Why do you think God chooses to work this way?

2. What are the five ways that Richard Niebuhr says Christians can relate to culture? Into which camp do you default? Do you believe that all Christians should default to one camp over another? Defend your answer.

3. Who speaks the truth to culture today? Is it harder today to speak truth lovingly than it was ten years ago? Why might that be the case? And why does that challenge dictate that we strive even harder to speak the truth in love today?

4. What happens when you speak only the truth? What happens when you speak only with love?

