

# WEEK 4 - What Now?

## Disagreement

### Spring Emphasis 25 // Canopy Guide

#### CONVERSATION STARTERS:

*These questions are great for breaking the ice and getting your group talking. Pick a question or two that fits your group for an all play conversation.*

- What is a minor thing that you have a major opinion about?
  - Coffee or tea?
  - Vanilla or chocolate?
  - Cherry pie or apple pie?
  - What toppings don't belong on pizza?
- Can you share a story about a time when you grew because you chose to see things from another person's point of view?

WEEK 4 VIDEO INTRO: [CLICK HERE](#)

#### DISCUSSION GUIDE

To help us focus our discussion, we're going to spend some time looking at Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. In this sermon, Jesus offers a vision for how love of God is tied to loving our neighbors. We can't separate out how we treat each other from how we see God. Jesus invites his followers to see each other with dignity. More than that, we are called to see each other as fellow children of God. We explored this thought in week 2 with our conversation on identity. We trust God's words on who we were created to be as image bearers, and this identifier isn't limited to how we see ourselves, but also to how we choose to see those around us. We are called to trust that our neighbors bear God's image

just as much as we do.

As Jesus teaches, this new perspective changes the way we treat each other, including how we approach disagreement. This new narrative of what it means to be human reshapes our life together as people who bring different perspectives but nevertheless united as the people of God.

So, let's spend some time checking out two passages in the Sermon on the Mount that have to do with disagreement.

## **SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSSION**

Read Matthew 7:1-5.

- Chances are you may have heard this passage before. For a moment, think about Jesus' rhetorical question as a real one: "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye but do not notice the log in your own eye?" When is it easier to notice someone else's flaws and failings but not recognize your own? And when is it easier to notice your own shortcomings in unhealthy ways?
- What does it look like to "take the log out of your own eye"?
- How could we apply this teaching to our conversations and interactions?

Ok now let's jump over to Matthew 5:43-48. Go ahead and read it together.

- Jesus invites us to see our enemies the way God sees us. What would it look like to cultivate a generous imagination (as Evan describes in the video) for those folks who are challenging for you to love or easy for you to gossip about?
- Do you have a personal example where a divisive issue caused problems with a personal or close relationship? Did things get worked out, end poorly, or are you in the midst of it right now?
- What might it look like practically to love someone you disagree with?
- Reading these two passages together, how might seeing clearly and loving our enemies help us to break out of isolation and live in deeper community?

## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Here's the link to the Surgeon General's report on loneliness and isolation. Chapter 3 is most relevant to our discussion:

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>

[Crucial Conversations](#) is a great book resource full of practical tools to equip you for healthy ways to go about having hard conversations. They've got a great youtube channel with specific videos on a variety of subjects, but here's a great playlist to explore: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhkv1sn9pLw&list=PLq6xHLjpkweKfwcqt2Iaj7ysDdHFzHvN&index=2>

Check out this podcast from the Stanford School of Business, "The Art of Disagreeing Without Conflict: Navigating the Nuance | Think Fast, Talk Smart:"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQTsDsPNSTw>

For a deeper look into the importance of trust, you could check out chapter 9 of Scot McKnight and Laura Barringer's [\*A Church Called Tov\*](#). They look out how practicing truth-telling is essential to being the church God has called us to be.