
Shady Grove

April 24, 2024



To get the most out of this study we recommend that you read David Platt's book. To order your copy of the book go to lifeway.com and use ISBN 978-1-4300-4335-5 or item number 005758370. Books are available by hardcover or digital format.

Introduction

On popular issues like poverty and slavery, about which Christians are likely to be applauded for our social action, we're quick to stand up and speak out. Yet on controversial issues like homosexuality and abortion, about which Christians are likely to be criticized for our social action, we're content to sit down and stay quiet.

It's as if we've decided to pick and choose which social issues we'll contest in our culture and which we'll concede. And our picking and choosing normally revolves around what's most comfortable—and least costly—for us.

What if the main issue isn't poverty or sex trafficking, homosexuality or abortion? What if the main issue is God? What if the main issue is the glory of God revealed in the gospel? And what might happen if we made Him our focus instead of a particular social issue?



Our Goal:

In a world marked by sex slavery and sexual immorality, the abandonment and murder of children, racism and persecution, the needs of the poor and the neglect of the widow, how would we act if we fixed our gaze on the holiness, love, goodness, truth, justice, authority, and mercy of God as revealed in the gospel? How would our approach to social issues change?

So the aim in this Bible study is to call us to a contrite, compassionate but courageous response on the battle lines in our culture with the gospel. This Bible study is aimed toward helping one another think through how to apply the gospel consistently in our culture in such a way that we're able to speak the gospel clearly to our culture. [David Platt (2015). Counter Culture. LifeWay Press. Retrieved from <https://app.wordsearchbible.com>]

Week 1: Culture

WELCOME EVERYONE TO YOUR FIRST GROUP DISCUSSION OF COUNTER CULTURE.

Culture is defined as the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time.

Where did you grow up? How would you describe the culture in which you grew up?

How would you describe the general culture of where we live today?

Describe a time when you felt that you clearly didn't fit in.

(For example: You thought it was a costume party. You sat in the opposing team's section. You went to the wrong class. Maybe you walked into the wrong restroom. You couldn't speak the language. You didn't understand an international custom. You got lost.)

As followers of Christ, we won't always fit into the world in which we live. In fact, we'll find ourselves going against the flow of popular culture in certain areas of life.

This Bible study will provide a solid biblical foundation to stand on in the midst of a rapidly shifting cultural landscape. The goal of this study is to understand how the eternal Word of God shapes our understanding of current issues and how we can share the gospel compassionately and courageously with the people around us.

To prepare to view the video segment, read aloud Romans 12:2.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- Romans 12:2

[David Platt (2015). Counter Culture. LifeWay Press. Retrieved from <https://app.wordsearchbible.com>]

WATCH The Video Lesson: Counter Culture Session 1

COMPLETE THE VIEWER GUIDE BELOW AS YOU WATCH DVD SESSION 1.

These days in our culture require authentic _____, real passion for God.
TWO PRAYERS FROM ACTS 17

1. God, make us zealous for Your _____.

- _____ of the universe
- _____ of life
- _____ of the nations
- _____ of the needy
- _____ of each of us
- _____ over all of us
- _____ of the world

2. God, make us passionate for people's _____.

Let's _____ the gospel clearly.

FIVE TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL

1. The _____ of God: God is the holy, just, and gracious Creator of all things.

2. The _____ of man: we're each created by God, but we're all corrupted by sin.

3. The _____ of Christ: Jesus alone is able to remove our sin and reconcile us to _____ God.

4. The _____ of faith: the way to be reconciled to God is through faith in Jesus.

5. The _____ of eternity: our eternal destiny is dependent on our response to _____ Jesus.

Let's _____ the gospel completely.

RESPOND

DISCUSS THE DVD SEGMENT WITH YOUR GROUP, USING THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

What was most helpful, encouraging, or challenging in this session? Why?

On what social issues are you most likely to be courageous, outspoken, and active? Why?

On what social issues are you most likely to remain silent, uncertain, or inactive? Why?

Explain what David meant by “Our supposed social justice becomes a selective social injustice.”

What relationship exists between action on social issues and a desire for God’s glory? What do silence and inaction communicate?

In Acts 17:16-34 why is it significant to see Paul as a Christian explaining his beliefs rather than as a preacher?

When have you felt or been told that you were arrogant or had no right to tell other people what you believe to be true?

Explain what David shared about truth and love not being arrogant. How does this perspective give you courage and compassion?

Why are both courage and compassion important in addressing controversial social issues? Which comes easier to you—courage or compassion?

THIS WEEK

This week be prayerfully aware of points of commonality and points of conflict between the gospel and our culture. Memorize Romans 12:2 and practice summarizing the five truths of the gospel in a conversational presentation that could be shared in about one minute.

READ week 1 and complete the activities before the next group experience.

READ the introduction and chapter 1 in the book Counter Culture by David Platt (Tyndale, 2015).