



eating  
*with*  
enemies

## **4-WEEK STUDY**

PURSUING UNITY IN  
A DIVIDED WORLD

### **WEEK 1**

**HOW TO DISAGREE WITHOUT BEING A JERK:**  
3 THOUGHTS ON DISAGREEING WITH THE PEOPLE  
WE CARE ABOUT





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## WEEKLY READING

**Primary text from this week:** Romans 12:9-21

**Secondary text from this week:** Luke 6:27-36, Matthew 5:43-44, Proverbs 25:21-22, Ephesians 4:29-32, Philippians 2:3-5, James 1:19

## GETTING STARTED

**Goals for this session:** To learn how to disagree in a way that honors God and pursues reconciliation

**Missed the sermon?** Watch it at [www.youtube.com/venturamissionary](http://www.youtube.com/venturamissionary)

**Break the Ice:** Name one of your pet peeves.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Doug encouraged us to practice four postures: **(1) listen empathetically, (2) speak humbly, (3) pray consistently, and (4) eat with others regularly.** Which of these do you find most challenging?
2. In his book, ***Jesus Outside the Lines***, Scott Sauls writes: "When the grace of Jesus sinks in, we will be among the least offended and most loving people in the world." Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Do you find that to be true of people who have followed Jesus for many years?
3. Have everyone in the group silently read **Romans 12:9-21** and then respond to the following question:  
**(a)** which of these instructions is most difficult for you? After the discussion, ask the follow up question:  
**(b)** how does your understanding of Romans 12:1-2 affect your reaction to verses 9-21?
4. Have someone in the group read **James 3:9-10**. As you think about the words you've spoken, texted, or posted this week do those verses encourage you or convict you? Why?
5. Have someone in the group read **Philippians 2:3-5**. What do you think Paul means when he encourages us to value others above ourselves? What might that look like when we experience a disagreement with someone?
6. Read Jesus' prayer in **John 17:20-23**. How well has the Church (not just "our church," but "*THE Church*") done at fulfilling Jesus' prayer for unity among his followers? What are some obstacles we face in fulfilling Jesus' prayer?
7. What are some steps you can take this week to handle your disagreements in a way that honors God and pursues reconciliation and unity?



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## PRAYER

**Pray for each other:** Pray that each member of the group would be able to practice our four postures this week: **(1)** *listen empathetically*, **(2)** *speak humbly*, **(3)** *pray consistently*, and **(4)** *eat with others regularly*.

**Pray for yourself:** Ask the Lord to help you focus on His mercy (Romans 12:1) so that you respond to disagreements in a way that honors God and pursues reconciliation.

**Pray for your four:** Identify four people who don't know Jesus (friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers/classmates), and commit to pray for them consistently. Pray that **(1)** God would reveal Jesus to them, **(2)** that God would turn their hearts towards Him, **(3)** that God would put Christians in their path to represent Christ, and **(4)** that God would give you an opportunity to share what Christ has done in your life.

## ACTION STEPS

**Share a meal with someone.** This week, make time to share a meal (or coffee) with someone you have experienced distance or strain with.

## NOTES

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