



Bible Study – Dialogue 4

“3 R’S” OF SOCIAL CHANGE: “*ROLLOVER, REACT, REFRAME*”

Based on Chapter Three of *GOD Is the Issue*
Leader's Notes

“His reply amazed them, and they went away.”

- Matthew 22:22 -

The Point ...

... of this study, based on Chapter 3 (and Chapter 4, Rule 4) of *GOD Is the Issue*, is to clarify the difference between defense and offense, and the importance of staying on offense (reframing) in order to make the God of the Bible the issue.

- *Group Leader's Notes are in bold italics*
- *Additional questions the Group Leader may use for clarity or additional stimulation of dialogue are in bold.*
- *The Check It Out and Think It Out segments are the most critical. Everything else reinforces these two segments. Keep this in mind as you budget your time.*
- *Questions with a star ★ are the most critical. Questions without a star may be omitted if necessary.*

Warm Up

1. What kind of responses did you receive this past week to the question: “How do you view Christianity?” Did any of them surprise you? Did you gain any new insights?
- ★ 2. When confronted with any issue, you can respond in one of three ways (apart from changing your mind):
 - Rollover (*give up*) *Try to ignore something*
 - React (*defense*) *Try to stop something*
 - Reframe (*offense*) *Try to advance something*

Choose one of the major social/moral issues confronting our culture today and describe what it would look like to respond in each of these three ways.

3. In light of where our culture is today, do you think our strategy should focus primarily on reacting or reframing? Why?
 - *The critical question that each person needs to answer is whether or not the status quo is acceptable. That answer will determine whether we need to react or reframe.*

Check It Out

- ★ 1. Read Joshua 5:13-15 (**Joshua Before the Battle of Jericho**)
 - a) Using the 3 R's or Social Change as your grid, evaluate how the Angel of God responded to Joshua's view of reality.
 - b) Given that Joshua was the leader of Israel, *appointed by God himself*, does the angel's response surprise you even slightly? Why or why not?
 - *How do you think Joshua viewed his primary role as the battle was getting ready to commence, first before and then after this dialogue?*
 - a. *Before: to lead God's people.*
 - b. *After: to follow God's lead.*
- 2. Read John 8:1-11 (**The Woman Caught in Adultery**)
 - a) What do you think was the intent of the Pharisees?
 - *To publicly undermine Jesus' popularity and credibility with the masses, or to get him in trouble with the Roman Government.*
 - b) How did Jesus respond?
 - *Immediately took control of the tempo by making them wait for an answer.*
 - *He reframed the issue from the woman's breaking of one specific law to the religious leaders' inability to keep God's other Laws.*
 - *He opened the door for the woman to be able to change and follow God.*
 - c) What was the result of how Jesus handled this situation?
 - *The religious leaders backed down.*
 - *A woman's life was saved.*
 - *Jesus' credibility with the masses probably went up.*

- ★ 3. Read Mt 22: 15-22 (“**Give to Caesar...**”)
- a) What were the Pharisees hoping to accomplish?
 - *To publicly humiliate Jesus, either undermining his popularity with the masses or getting him arrested by the Roman authorities.*
 - b) Explain each step of Jesus’ response.
 - *He immediately went on offense, by legitimately calling His opponents “hypocrites.”*
 - *He took control of the dialogue by asking a question of his own.*
 - *He then reframed the entire issue from man’s obligation to man, to man’s obligation to God. He made God the issue.*
 - c) In light of this passage, how would you describe the difference between being tolerant and being loving?
 - *Tolerance says that you can do whatever you want and its okay.*
 - *Love says there is real right and wrong but God mercifully offers forgiveness when we blow it.*
4. Read Mt. 22:23-33 (**Marriage at the resurrection**)
- a) What were the Sadducees trying to do?
 - *Undermine Jesus’ credibility*
 - b) Again, describe each step of Jesus’ response.
 - *He went on offense by publicly attacking the credibility of his opponents.*
 - *Then he addressed the underlying issue of what happens to people after they die—is that the end or do they continue to exist in another form, using that to bring the issue back to their flawed view of God.*
 - c) How did the “multitudes” respond?
5. Read Mt 22:41-46 (**Who is the Christ?**)
- a) How does this situation differ from the previous situations?
 - *Jesus initiated the conversation.*
 - b) What do you think was Jesus’ intentions?
 - *To better establish his authority in the minds of the masses (offense).*
 - *To put his opponents on defense in order to further damage their credibility. In fact, in light of the following chapter, Jesus’ intention was to attack and crush the credibility of his opponents. He was 100% on offense.*

- c) How did the Pharisees respond?
- *Total silence*
- d) Did Jesus accomplish what he intended? What evidence can you give?
- *No one could answer his question.*
 - *No one dared to challenge him again.*
 - *(Note: the next chapter sheds further light on Jesus' intentions.)*
- ★ 6. Read Mt 13:24-30, 36-43 (**Wheat & Tares/Weeds**)
- a) What did Jesus say should be our primary focus and what do you think He meant?
- *Growing the wheat. Offense.*
- b) What did Jesus say we should not focus on and what do you think He meant?
- *Pulling up tares/weeds. Defense.*
- c) Describe how that looks like in real life?
- *As much as possible we should seek to point people toward God rather than reacting to the evil around us. (If a person is spiritually blind, they will act like someone who is spiritually blind. The solution is not to condemn them for their blind behavior. The solution is to help open their spiritual eyes.)*
- d) Explain this parable using the terms, "Rollover, React, Reframe."
- *ROLLOVER – do nothing. Go sleep in the bar; ignore evil around us.*
 - *REACT—pull up weeds by reacting to the immorality around us.*
 - *REFRAME—focus on growing more wheat by always bringing the focus back to who God really is and why it matters within the specific context of the dialogue.*

Think It Out

1. Evaluate the issue of ABORTION in American culture using the "3 R's".
 - a) Explore and contrast what it looks like on this issue to Rollover; React; Reframe.
 - *ROLL OVER: Do nothing.*

- **REACT:** Focus on convincing people to change their view about abortion.
 - **REFRAME:** Look at abortion as a platform from which to help move people's point of reference from themselves to God, which, if successful ultimately results in a change in their belief about abortion, as well as many other symptomatic issues.
 - (See page 142 in GOD Is the Issue for examples of what this looks like.)
- b) Under what circumstances might it be the right choice to "React" on this issue?
- **When someone is physically headed to have an abortion our goal should be to save a life created by God in His image by stopping wrong behavior if we can.**
- c) How do you think Jesus might reframe the abortion issue in order to help save lives, but also drive people back to who God really is and why it matters?
- ★ 2. Evaluate the issue of **HOMOSEXUALITY** using the "3 R's."
- a) What does it look like to "Rollover"?
- **Duck! Say nothing!**
- b) Describe how Christians often react on this issue?
- **Telling a non-Christian: "Homosexuality is wrong."**
- c) How can we "Reframe" this issue?
- **Say something like, "There's absolutely nothing wrong with homosexuality—unless the God of the Bible actually exists."**
 - **Drive the dialogue back to who is God and why it matters.**
 - **Patching cracks in the wall without repairing the foundation just leads to more cracks. (See page 142 for more information.)**
3. Evaluate the issue of "**SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE**" using the "3 R's."
- a) What does it look like to "Rollover"?
- **Do nothing. Say nothing. Beat a hasty retreat.**
- b) What are some ways we often "react"?
- **Point out that that Constitution of the United States NEVER uses the term "Separation of Church and State." This is reacting because the**

average American believes in Separation of Church and State and thinks it is in the Constitution even though they do not know what the term really means or where it comes from.

- c) How could this issue be “reframed”?
- *Say something like, “I believe in Separation of Church and State like Thomas Jefferson defined it, because I AGREE with Jefferson that the federal government should never censor religious speech. Besides, if God really exists, why would we want to pressure people not to talk about God? Maybe the real conversation we need to have in this country is, ‘Does God exist or not, and if He does, who is He?’”*

This effectively redefines the perceived meaning of the phrase “Separation of Church and State” while implying (correctly) that some people are trying to censor religious speech from the Public Square. Rather than reacting to the term “Separation of Church and State,” let’s co-opt it to help make God the primary issue.

(For further information see pages 135-138 in GOD Is the Issue.)

Sort It Out

REAL LIFE SITUATION:

One day after Brad had finished speaking, a man stood up and identified himself as the head of the gay/lesbian alliance in the local community. He said, “The Bible never condemns homosexuality.” How would you respond to that statement and why?

BRAD’S RESPONSE:

“Every time God makes a CLEAR CUT statement in the Bible about homosexual behavior it is always a negative statement. If every time I make a statement about broccoli it is always negative, you are going to conclude correctly I don’t like broccoli. I think God is smart enough to understand this dynamic. He’s not stupid. So I’ll make you a deal, if you can show me just ONE CLEAR CUT positive statement in the Bible about homosexual behavior, not only will I admit you’re right but I’ll even help champion your cause.”

“However, the real issue here is our starting points. You clearly start with yourself and what you want, while I try to start with who God is and what He

wants. As long as our starting points are so radically divergent, we will never be able to agree on the issue of homosexual behavior.”

Act It Out

Pair up with another person in your group. One person play the role of Brad. The other person play the role of the homosexual activist. Reverse roles back and forth a few times until you can respond with confidence.

Wrap Up

1. Suggested reading for this week: Chapter 4, Rules 4 & 5, of *GOD Is the Issue* (pgs. 83-96). As you read, ask yourself the following question: Why does it take so long to bring about real and substantive change within culture?
2. This week, ask three people *from varied backgrounds* what they think is the best change in our culture over the last 20 years and the worst change in our culture over the last 20 years. (You may want to have some ideas in mind in case they need a jump start in their thinking.) Again, do not be argumentative. Try to really understand what they are saying. Listen. Be prepared to report your findings to the group next week.

Note to small group leader: You may want to ask each person to write the names of three people on an index card that they would like to talk with this week about their view of God and their behavior. This will greatly increase the chances of the conversations actually occurring. The goal is to hear views from various types of people—not just people who all tend to think about God the same way.

3. Close in prayer asking God to provide each person in the group with three great opportunities this week to talk with people about how they view various changes that have occurred in the culture over the last 20 years.

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