

I. Check-In

- Check in. How is everyone doing? Did you practice the different types of prayer this week? What was your takeaway?

V. Prayer Requests

Spend some time sharing prayer requests with each other. As the small group leader, we ask that you do two things:

1. write them down
2. ask someone to pray

II. Scripture

He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 22:37-39

Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. 2 For the judgment you give will be the judgment you get, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. 3 Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye but do not notice the log in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.

Matthew 7:1-5

Quotes

“There is someone that I love, even though I don't approve of what he does. There is someone I accept, though some of his thoughts and actions revolt me. There is someone I forgive, though he hurts the people I love the most. That person is... me.”

C.S. Lewis

“The person who disagrees with you is not your enemy—they're a fellow human being.”

Braver Angels

IV. Challenge

Think through the Braver Angels questions on the next page. How can you be less critical of your neighbor?

III. Discussion Questions

- In what ways have you experienced the tendency to focus on the faults of others while ignoring your own? How do you think Jesus' teaching on removing the “log” in your own eye challenges us to approach others with more humility and grace?
- How does our critical attitude toward others affect our ability to love them as Jesus commanded? Can you think of a time when being critical created more division instead of fostering understanding?
- What practical steps can you take to “remove the log” from your own eye before addressing the faults of others? How can self-examination help you become more compassionate toward those who think, act, or believe differently?

See the next page for more questions from Braver Angels.



**DEPOLARIZING WITHIN:
BECOMING A BETTER ANGEL IN YOUR OWN WORLD**

Part 1: Recognizing My Inner Polarizer

You can use the following questions to think about your inner polarizer. (Don't worry: most of us think and feel some of these things.) Read and circle your responses.

1. How often do I find myself thinking about “those people” on the other political side without much regard for the variation among them? (Usually we're aware of great variation within our own group.) Circle one: Often, Sometimes, Never
2. How often do I find myself assigning mainly self-serving or negatives motives to the other group—and mainly positive motives to my group? Circle one: Often, Sometimes, Never
3. How often do I find myself focusing on the most extreme or outrageous ideas and people on the other side, thereby making it hard to see how a reasonable person could remain in that group? Circle one: Often, Sometimes, Never
4. How often do I find myself comparing the *worst people* on the other side with the *best people* on my side? Circle one: Often, Sometimes, Never
5. How often do I feel a “rush” of pleasure with friends when we ridicule those crazies on the other political side? Circle one: Often, Sometimes, Never
6. Which of the following is closest to my overall emotional attitude towards the majority of people who support the other side? Circle the one closest to where you are now and then the one you aspire to, if they are different.
 - Hate. They are enemies out to destroy the country.
 - Disdain. They are ignorant and should know better.
 - Pity. They are well meaning but duped.
 - Basic respect. They make contributions even if they are mostly off base.
 - Respect and appreciation. They make unique and necessary contributions