

GO DEEPER: LOVING THROUGH DISAGREEMENT

A Reflection Guide for "My 40-Year Friend Called Me 'Evil' - Here's How I Responded"

INTRODUCTION

In this vulnerable episode of Making Sense of Faith, Adam Hamilton opens his heart about one of ministry's most painful experiences: losing relationships over deeply held convictions. Through his personal story and the biblical account of Judas, Adam challenges us to examine how we love people who see the world completely differently than we do. As you reflect on this conversation, use this guide to explore your own capacity for radical love and consider how these insights might transform your most difficult relationships.

3 REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Take a moment to consider what stood out to you most from this story:

1. Adam asks whether Judas might have been forgiven if he had "just waited three days" to encounter the risen Christ. Think about a relationship in your life that ended badly - what might have been possible if someone had waited a little longer before giving up?
2. When faced with losing 800 church members, Adam experienced months of depression and considered leaving ministry. Describe a time when you've had to choose between your convictions and keeping the peace. How did you navigate that tension?
3. Adam's wife asked him a crucial question: "Is God calling you to leave or are you running away?" How do you distinguish between a healthy boundary and running away when relationships become difficult?

2 KEY INSIGHTS

1. Love doesn't require agreement

"The person who sees things differently on human sexuality or black lives matter or whatever, they're not your enemy. They're your fellow humans, right? But even if they were your enemy, you're called to love them."

Question: What might change in your difficult relationships if you truly saw disagreement as separate from the call to love?

Reflection: Consider a person you're struggling to love because of your differences. What would it look like to love them without compromising your own convictions? How might you express care while still maintaining your boundaries?

2. Sometimes love means wearing people down with grace

"You can attack our children and we're still gonna love you. You can bomb our homes and we're still gonna love you, but we're gonna wear you down by our capacity to love."

Question: How might persistent, patient love eventually transform a relationship where you've been written off or rejected?

Reflection: Think about someone who has hurt or rejected you. What would it look like to "wear them down" with love rather than responding with defensiveness or withdrawal? What specific actions could demonstrate this kind of persistent grace?

1 PRACTICE EXERCISE

The Three-Day Wait

Find a quiet space and take 10 minutes for this exercise

1. **Identify the relationship:** Think of a relationship that has been damaged by disagreement, hurt, or misunderstanding
2. **Write a letter:** Draft a response to that person (you won't send it yet) expressing:
 - Your genuine care for them as a person
 - Acknowledgment of the pain or disagreement without compromising your position
 - A specific way you want to show love moving forward
3. **Wait:** Put the letter aside for three days before deciding whether to send it, modify it, or simply let it inform how you approach the relationship
4. **Reflect:** During those three days, pray or meditate on this question: "What would love look like in this situation, even if the other person never changes their mind about me?"

Remember that loving through disagreement is a practice, not a one-time decision. You may need to choose love repeatedly, especially when it's not reciprocated.

QUOTES TO CONSIDER

"We're really sorry you feel that way, but we still love you. We disagree, but we still love you."

"What if he just waited three days, just actually from Friday to Sunday, 36 hours? Don't you think if he'd waited 36 hours and he saw the risen Christ... What do you think Jesus would've done? I think he would've forgiven him too."

"Is God calling you to leave or are you running away? And for most of the time I think God is not calling us to leave and we hang in there and then we see what God does after that."

CLOSING REFLECTION

Loving through disagreement isn't about being a doormat or compromising your convictions—it's about choosing to see the humanity in people who see you as wrong, misguided, or even evil. As you close this reflection time, consider one relationship where you can practice radical love this week. Remember that this kind of love often costs us something, but it's the only path toward the healing our divided world desperately needs.

This reflection guide was created to accompany the Making Sense of Faith podcast episode "My 40-Year Friend Called Me 'Evil' - Here's How I Responded." For more resources like this, visit makingsenseoffaith.com.