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A Charitable Discourse: Talking About The Things That Divide Us



Synopsis

Homosexuality, social drinking, and politics . . . Why is it so hard to talk about these topics and others like them in the church? What keeps us from having open and honest conversations about complex and controversial issues? The silence in the pews about these matters can be deafening. Often members say little, fearing disagreement and rebuttal, others strongly assert half-truths and biases. Nothing gets truly discussed, and many, especially the youth, become discouraged and leave. A Charitable Discourse insightfully explores why this happens, looking closely at the ways people avoid and prevent authentic dialog, from labeling and grandstanding to religious abuse. Seven controversial issues are discussed with understanding, sincerity, and compassion.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City (March 1, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 083412565X

ISBN-13: 978-0834125650

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 45 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #534,265 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #149 in [Christian Books & Bibles](#) > [Christian Denominations & Sects](#) > [Protestantism](#) > [Methodist](#) #1690

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Customer Reviews

Dan Boone is president of Trevecca Nazarene University. He received a master of divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary and a doctorate of ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary. Dan is a popular speaker in the Nazarene denomination; he has taught classes at Olivet Nazarene University and Nazarene Theological Seminary; has instructed for the Salvation Army; and pastored churches in Illinois, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee. He and his wife, Denise, live in Nashville, Tennessee. Boone blogs at www.DanBoone.me.

When I started reading this book I couldn't put it down! I was thinking "wow, somebody thinks like me!" Dan Boone does a great job of making you think about these tough issues and how to step

back and look at both sides - This is a lost art in the Christian church today. We assign labels to people and issues that divide us without really thinking through the issues. Jesus was not afraid of controversy and was not afraid to engage people who did not agree with him in a compassionate way - the church needs to do the same thing! Jesus saved his harshest criticisms and most angry interactions for the dogmatic, rule-driven Pharisees of his day that had no compassion for anything but their rules and the law. This book does not teach us to give up our principles but it encourages us to have civil debate with fellow believers and non-believers alike who disagree with us on some very sensitive issues. I think all churches should go through Dan Boone's book and learn how to TALK through things and LISTEN to others points of view instead of arguing with and isolating those that sometimes see things differently. If you think about it, there are truly only a few very black and white issues when it comes to the Gospel that are non-disputable (who Jesus was, salvation, etc.) but there are MANY areas where we as believers are going to disagree - this disagreement should not split us into "camps" and cause strife among our fellow believers. The truth is many of these "disputable" matters are not going to matter in the end so we need to learn how to agree to disagree on these issues and perhaps even learn another point of view along the way and develop compassion for others who are often hurting, broken people just like all of us! Always remember: "every person you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about, so be kind always!" (Get this book and read it - the DVD-based small group study is also very good!!)

I purchased this for a small group. While I may not agree with all its content, it provided a good basis for conversation.

Great book for talking about the hard issues In a small group forum. If the church does not talk about them are young people will not look to the church for the answers that God does provide. Handles the hard issues in a loving and caring way.

I seldom order multiple books to give to people I love and respect. This is one. Dan Boone, theologian and university president, handles many "hot potato" issues within evangelical Christianity with astounding sensitivity, courage, candor, clarity and love. I just finished reading it and intend to read it again. I need to reflect in my life the attitude and perspective he articulates so eloquently to all who will listen.

I admire this author. He handles all the subjects he writes about with superb knowledge. I can

quickly understand how he became president of Treveca.

Throughout this book I kept saying, "Amen, Amen. That is what I believe!" I want to hand chapters to others and say, "Here, this is what I have been trying to say." Growing up in a Christian pastor's home, this is the message that I learned, too. How has it happened that we have lost the way and did not seem to learn that holiness is purity of heart in love; not haughty uprightness. Thank you to the author for writing this book and opening these conversations.

The topics are challenging the response is balanced. It opens the door for dialogue. Dr. Boone's approach is passionate and insightful. It's worth your time to read, but more importantly, it calls you to develop your response with grace and understanding.

I actually took a class under Dr. Dan Boone and think he is one of the strong leaders of the church today. This study is one that will benefit any congregation or group. We need more people who are willing to have these tough conversations in the church today, and I am thankful Dr. Boone was willing to begin the discussion. Great Book, and discussion DVD.

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