



Name: Tony Campolo

Title: The positive prophet of Red Letter Christianity

Discussion Guide

This resource is designed to help your small group or college class discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways to understand the issues discussed in this video. You don't need to answer all the questions. Please allow time for discussion and response.

Materials

1. Person Interviewed: Tony Campolo
2. Theme of Video: The positive prophet of Red Letter Christianity

Preliminary discussion

Consider the questions suggested below to start the conversation for your small group or college class. They'll consolidate the content of the video, after you've viewed it.

1. What were the major themes in this video?
2. How do those themes relate to your life and context?
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?
4. Theological method: How is the interviewee's theology and outlook informed and shaped by their practical ministry and context? What approaches do they take in understanding God in the context of their daily life and ministry?

Explore and apply

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with the theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion. Apply the answers to these questions in your own setting. Ensure the discussion is specifically drawing on your local setting. Make sure the discussion is relevant to the lives of faith for your small group or college class. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

- Tony Campolo wrote *Red Letter Christians* with Shane Claiborne. What is the big idea or main message of that book?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for faith in today's political environment?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for faith in today's religious environment?
- Over the past couple of decades, evangelical Christians have tended to be associated with the religious right and the most conservative positions of the Republican Party. What has that done for perceptions about (and attitudes toward) faith? What has that done for the way faith is expressed in the US?
- What is a Red Letter Christian? See www.redletterchristians.org
- How do red letter Christians compare with evangelicals and their beliefs, but also differ from some forms of evangelicalism?
- What are the key features or characteristics of "Red Letter Theology"?
- Carson levels 2 criticisms are red-letter Christians, and I wonder how you'd respond to them?

1. Are Red Letter Christians making a "canon within a canon" in order to bless their preferred form of theology?

2. Do they read and emphasize the words of Jesus apart from the narrative framework of the Gospels, and thus down-play Jesus's death and resurrection? (i.e. do you downplay the significance of the climax of the Gospels: Jesus's death and resurrection?)

3. How does Tony Campolo respond to these criticisms?

* How can we jumpstart a religious movement that will transcend partisan politics and concentrate on issues such as fighting poverty, caring for the environment, advancing peace, promoting strong families, and supporting a consistent ethic of life, all viewed as critical moral and biblical values?

* What are some other hot-button issues facing evangelicals from the perspective of Jesus's red-letter words in the Bible?

* How do red-letter Christians respond to these issues?

Poverty

Immigration

Creation care and the environment

Women and movements such as #MeToo

Racism and reconciliation

Gun control

Same-sex marriage

Civil disobedience

War and violence

Political parties and movements (whether secular or so-called Christian parties)

Informing Community

Facilitate the space for your group to respond to the discussion. You might consider this section as a personal time of written journal responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging our group and me, to do?
2. In response to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask God for forgiveness in? How do I need to change? What does God want me to stand up for?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community, for us to better engage with the contextual issues of our community?
4. How can I gain a better understanding of the issues discussed in this video? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt.

Invite the ministry of the Holy Spirit to clarify, heal, and inspire change for your participants and communities.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Books:

Graham Joseph Hill and Grace Ji-Sun Kim. *Healing Our Broken Humanity: Practices for Revitalizing the Church and Renewing the World* (IVP, 2018).

Graham Joseph Hill. *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2016).

Graham Joseph Hill. *Salt, Light, and a City (Second Edition): Ecclesiology for the Global Missional Community: Volume 1, Western Voices* (Cascade, 2017).

Graham Joseph Hill. *Salt, Light, and a City: Conformation—Ecclesiology for the Global Missional Community: Volume 2, Majority World Voices* (Cascade, 2020).

Graham Joseph Hill. *Holding Up Half the Sky: A Biblical Case for Women Leading and Teaching in the Church* (Cascade, 2020).

Graham Joseph Hill and Michael Frost. *Hide This in Your Heart: Bible Memory for Discipleship and Mission* (NavPress, 2020).