



GOD'S ~~NOT~~ DEAD

IN GOD WE TRUST

DISCUSSION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The biggest “faith movie” franchise returns in the latest movie in the God’s Not Dead movie series. It is especially relevant because of the political and spiritual turmoil our country and the world are currently experiencing. When a pastor, Reverend David Hill, feels impressed by God to use his voice and energy as a candidate for Congress, viewers get a glimpse of the inner workings and complications surrounding candidacy and the election process. His opponent, Peter Kane, sees no place for faith, religion, or God in American government.

Both candidates have political advisors, and in this story, their prior history unfolds a subplot. Viewers will be encouraged by the strength of Reverend Hill.

God’s Not Dead: In God We Trust offers hope for our future. If people stand up, vote, and take responsibility for our citizenry role, we pray that God will heal our land. He divinely inspired our forefathers to establish a “We the People...for the people and by the people” ideal for government that was intended to treat all men and women equally. They believed God gave us certain unalienable rights, so they authored our God-inspired Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

Today, many are asking what has happened to those ideals and what kind of future we can expect for the next generations.

For Group Facilitators: The movie discussion guide is meant for youth groups and families to use once they’ve seen the film. The aim is to inspire each other with input as you dig into Scripture regarding government. Suggested film clips can also be shown during group gatherings and should prompt even more insights. Our prayer is for everyone’s faith to grow.

It will be important to incite positive actions in attendees. This film can also be used in homes for neighborhood gatherings for listening AND understanding from even those whose political views may differ. Respectful conversations can change minds!

God’s Not Dead: In God We Trust deals with themes of love, integrity, compassion, guilt, shame, forgiveness, civic responsibility and God’s will. Ultimately, this guide and gathering together have a bigger purpose, which is to call everyone into a deeper walk with Jesus Christ. As we know, He changes everything!

God's Not Dead: In God We Trust is available in theaters beginning September 12, in churches September 19 through the end of November, and through other channels afterwards. This film will inspire and challenge you to explore the enduring relevance of faith in the public space and the fight to keep religious values at the heart of governance. For more information on how to view this film, visit GodsNotDead.com.

This Discussion Guide was created in partnership with All Pro Pastors International and written by Cheryl Johnston.

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS SPOILERS

and is intended to use after a group has seen the film.

View the trailer for
GOD'S NOT DEAD: IN GOD WE TRUST



OPENING PRAYER

Dear Lord: Thank you for creative films that help us to learn more about your loving ways. Thank you for those you've gifted to write, act, produce and fund them. It's exciting to see so many more faith-based movies. Please give us open eyes, ears, minds, and hearts to discover your plans through this one. And ultimately, may you be glorified. Amen.

DISCUSSION ONE:

GOD INSPIRES ACTION IN HIS PEOPLE

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:10–11



Let's start this discussion with a quick question: "Do you know what your spiritual gift or gifts are?" After a moment or two, let's get better acquainted by sharing (i.e. mercy, administration, teaching, generosity, etc.). This will help us connect and gain interesting perspectives as we respond to the discussion questions.

In the film's introduction, we hear the impactful words from inspirational speeches by Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy, and Billy Graham. Reverend Hill is saddened and feels helpless when the St. Luke's Women's Center cannot remain open due to the lack of government funding. He's also saddened when he hears the new incumbent Senator Peter Kane announce that "Religious superstition has no place in influencing our laws and government...Here's to enlightenment, reason, and reshaping our nation's core."

As Reverend Hill is quietly reflecting in the church, his friend Martin describes the parallels between what happened in China 50 years ago and what he sees as "a similar revolution brewing in America now." Under the guise of progress in China, religion and faith took the brunt of criticism and persecution. Churches were destroyed, Christians were put into camps, and countless were killed. Martin encourages his pastor by suggesting, "Perhaps God put those mountains in front of you to show you they can be moved."

Reverend Hill asks God for guidance and direction about what action he should take. He believes God directs him to become a congressional candidate. Initially, he is hesitant, probably because of his pastoral

responsibilities and his inexperience in the political arena.

In this story, God uses people who may not be Christ-followers yet to accomplish His will. Senator Daryl Smith believes Hill can win the election because he speaks the truth, so Smith hires political advisor Lottie Jay to handle Hill's campaign. Her nemesis, political advisor John Wesley, is handling Senator Kane's efforts. When she hesitates to get involved because she's angry at Wesley, Senator Smith says, "I'm not asking you to forget about your past. I'm asking you to help shape our country's future."

She accepts the challenge, but it appears that revenge against Wesley is her motive. In the process of encouraging Hill to run for office, she uses phrases like, "You can't win unless you play the game" and "Get out of the boat."

Perhaps the most persuasive phrase comes when Hill seeks wise advice from Congressman Smith. He's challenged by the question, "What if it's not about you?"

So, it follows that this question should prompt us to ask ourselves before we act, "What if this is all about Him?" How can we use our spiritual gifts to serve Him (ultimately) as we serve each other?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. Use three words to describe how that opening clip and the words of Reagan, Kennedy, and Graham made you feel.**
- 2. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being very and 1 not so much, rank your level of concern for our country.**
- 3. Briefly share your thoughts with the group about to what degree pastors should be involved in politics.**
- 4. Have you felt the Lord's prompting about a specific action to take regarding our government? If so, offer details and how you are responding.**
- 5. Have you ever been challenged into action by someone who hasn't yet connected with Jesus? If so, explain.**

DISCUSSION TWO:

OUR ACTIONS SHOULD REFLECT LOVE, COMPASSION, AND RESPECT

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:18

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God has forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:32



Reverend Hill feels frustrated that government funds for the repair of the St. Luke's Women's Center were withheld because some women held a Bible study in the building. In a conversation with one young mother, Reverend Hill is reminded that the sign outside the Center reads: "Provided by God through His people." The young mother asks, "Where are they, Pastor?" We see the compassion in his eyes when, sadly, Reverend Hill has no answer.

The pastor obviously respects people. In his television interview with Mike Huckabee, Hill responded to his comment, "You will get a lot of criticism," with: "My job as a congressman is to represent the people, not to impose my faith on them." While his sense of morality will be a guidepost in public service, this does not appear to be the case with his opponent, Senator Kane. When the arrogant and condescending Senator accuses Hill of potentially "crafting laws and policies based on superstition, irrationality, fear and ignorance, Hill responds with: "Suffice to say, I don't see it that way." It's obvious he sees Kane as a soul who needs the love and wisdom found in relationship with Christ.

Hill's manners and responses are kind and gentle when dealing with Lottie Jay, too. She chastises him after a podcast when he was kicked off because he challenged Kane with Godly wisdom. Hill asked, "You

want me to take God out of the equation and fight Kane with dirt? ...I know it's useless to fight dark with darkness." Surely, he's recalling the words in Romans 12:17 (AMP) that advise: "Never repay anyone with evil for evil. Take thought for what is right and gracious and proper in the sight of everyone."

While at dinner, Reverend Hill prays, thanking God for the meal and for Lottie. Did you notice her reaction? With only a few words, Reverend Hill is planting seeds of faith. In her hotel room afterward, we see Lottie tearing strips of tissue (as a superstition for decision-making for should I or shouldn't I). Apparently, the last strip was confirmation that she should – and so we see her lifting a Bible out of the hotel's nightstand drawer.

God is surely at work, even when we are unaware of His plan.

Later, when she calls home to check on her young son, she is reminded that "It takes strength to forgive" John Wesley for making her suffer.

Sometimes Christians must stand up and express their righteous indignation. Yet, even in the heated television debate during which Reverend Hill is more forceful in his stand for less government involvement, we see his compassion afterward when Senator Kane confronts and threatens him backstage.

No matter how we feel about the character of our leaders and elected officials, God still expects us to offer them respect. Even when we must confront someone with difficult truths, our dignity and integrity are reflected in the courteous manner we present differing views or opinions. Being rude and unkind to those we disagree with does not honor the Lord. This is why it is so important to seek His wisdom, carefully choose our words, and trust God for the results as we respect others.

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.

Romans 13:1 (NLT)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How did the young woman's question about "Where are they" make you feel?
2. How can God's people better provide for those in need?
3. In what other scenarios do we see Reverend Hill's compassion, and how does that impact you?
4. How do you think the Holy Spirit was involved in Pastor Hill's actions?

DISCUSSION THREE:

GOD'S GUIDANCE IN MORAL DILEMMAS

the mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak what is just. The law of their God is in their hearts; their feet do not slip.

Psalm 37:30-31 (NIV)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)



From political experience, Lottie is convinced that “Negative campaigns work – they win.” Reverend Hill wants no part of “digging up dirt” on Kane.

In a voicemail when he seeks wise counsel from Congressman Smith, he says he doesn’t know what he’s doing, and that he feels like he has two options: Do the things God asked him not to do or lose the race.

While we don’t get to hear Smith’s return call or advice, we see Hill’s resolve the next day when Lottie shows him evidence (a.k.a. “dirty laundry”) indicating Kane was involved in money laundering and bribery of a judge. She is shocked when the good reverend directs her to destroy the evidence.

Then someone leaks the evidence without the pastor or Lottie’s knowledge. Once that happens, Kane and Wesley produce evidence of the charges being fraudulent, and Hill is seen as an imposter. The humble pastor is frustrated, because this was not his desired outcome.

When the church board asks Hill to step down from his pastorate, even though this doesn’t seem

fair or just, Hill turns in his church keys without a complaint. In faith, he trusts that God has a plan.

If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

James 1:26-27

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. When Hill refuses to use negative campaign tactics, which of his character traits are reflected most?
2. Have you ever been the victim of undeserved negative remarks or “dirty laundry?” Share briefly.
3. Do you have a trustworthy friend who listens well and offers sound advice when you ask? Speak their name out loud (and then thank them in person or with a card).
4. Do you think it was possible that God’s plan for Hill’s potential role in politics would involve a temporary leave from his church?
5. Can you describe a time when you knew God had a plan, even though you couldn’t imagine it yet?

DISCUSSION FOUR:

GOD'S PLAN FOR HUMANKIND, HIS CREATION

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

And this is his commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us.

1 John 3:23

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27



God created us in His image so He could have a relationship with us. He gave us our intricate bodies, our complex minds, and our ability to learn and grow through His Word. Our gracious Creator also gave us gifts to use for serving our fellowman and for inviting those we encounter into the joy, peace, and freedom of His love.

This love is for ALL who will call on His Name and accept His gift of salvation, which leads to eternal life. Once we experience this unconditional love, we want to give Him our whole heart. In exchange, we have true freedom to become all He wants us to be. With this freedom, we can share about Him and pursue His purpose. This is our living sacrifice – to love as He loves and to make Him known to the ends of the earth.

As David Hill prepares to step on stage for the final debate with Peter Kane, he quotes Scripture to remind himself of God's promises. Psalm 37:5 is a command with a promise. "Commit your way to the

Lord; Trust also in Him and He will bring it to pass.” The reverend’s commitment is slightly tested when Peter Kane suggests he concede the election and have everything given back to him – his reputation, his job, and the reopening of the women’s center, but Hill has put his hand to the plow and wants to see God finish His work.

God wants His people to stand for righteousness and to be victorious. He wants us to trust Him and to experience outrageous joy and inexplicable peace in the knowledge that we are loved. He sent Jesus to redeem our lives from sin and He sent the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter and Guide. What more can we ask for?

Take a moment to consider these encouraging verses and how they can be applied to your life.

Psalm 33:12 (NIV) - Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He chose for His inheritance.

Psalm 149:4 (AMP) - For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation.

In the final moments of the film, we see the results of God’s perfect plan for the characters, and it’s a beautiful thing.

- Associate Pastor Martin is preaching the Sunday sermon at St. Jude Church from Psalm 20:5-9. Now this I know; the Lord gives victory to His anointed. He answers him from his heavenly power. Some trust in chariots and some trust in horses...stand firm. Lord, give victory to the king, answer us when we call.”
- Tom, the trusted transportation driver, now sits in the congregation (who said he didn’t vote but that he would join the church).
- The newly elected Senator Hill is welcomed by a cheering crowd for the grand opening of the new St. Jude’s Women’s Center.
- New believer, Lottie Jay, is relaxing in a rocking chair on her cabin’s porch reading her Bible.

In this ending, we are confident that God really does weave all things together for our good.

So let us be encouraged to fight (in God’s strength) for what is right! And, as we battle for righteousness, may we all learn to trust in the One who loves us most, even when we walk through tough times. May we learn to use our voice for the betterment of mankind. And in all things, may we give Him glory and honor Him with our praise.

For truly, God is good, and all the time, God is good!

LET'S PUT OUR FAITH INTO ACTION



So, now that we're motivated to act, how can we help our families, our neighbors, and our communities? Here are a few suggestions. Make note of others your group mentions as well.

- Commit to voting in both local and national elections. You can register and receive a personalized Voter Guide at [My Faith Votes](#).
- Become more aware of the issues and key political positions by visiting [Biblical Voter](#).
- Commit to pray consistently for our nation and the nations of our world. Pray that God will raise up leaders who know and serve Him. Pray for our churches and for revival. Keep a prayer journal and record how God answers yours.
- Learn more about how our government works at the city, country, state, and national levels.
- Consider taking the free online courses offered by the following institutions:
 - » [Patriot Academy](#)
 - Biblical Citizenship in Modern America
 - Constitutional Defense
 - » [Hillsdale College](#)
 - Constitution 101
- Share what you learn with others and especially with the next generation.
- Host a God's Not Dead Bible study in your neighborhood using this Discussion Guide.
- Attend candidate forums.
- Volunteer to assist at the polls.

- Use your voice and your pen. Respectfully speak out on matters you care about and communicate those also in writing to authorities and elected officials.
- Attend city and county commission meetings and school board meetings to stay abreast of changes.
- Volunteer to assist with campaigns for those whose policies you support.
- If the Lord prompts you, be courageous and seek election or appointment. Most communities have volunteer advisory boards for planning and management. They need and want your input.
- Share the movie.
- Buy tickets to the movie for yourself or as a gift to others.
- Post about the film on social media using #godsnotdead, #godsnotdeadingodwetrust, etc.
- Get involved at schools (prayer walks, 'See You at the Pole', etc.)
- Donate to organizations to spread the word.



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