

Disagree Agreeably (Antonin Scalia)

In recent years the issues on which people publicly disagree have become increasingly contentious and paired with more vivid malice. Almost without noticing the shift, our culture has moved from attacking someone's *idea* to thinking we're entitled to attack the *person* who holds that idea. We've lost our way. We focus so intently on our *differences* that we become blind to human dignity. God never treats *anyone* with disrespect, even when they disagree with *Him*.

Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsberg

These two Supreme Court justices held vividly different legal positions, often clashing sharply over issues. Yet apparently they truly enjoyed each other's company. During a 2008 interview (aired on 60 Minutes shortly after Scalia's 2016 death) Scalia was asked how the two of them managed to stay good friends.

Scalia's answer should guide us all: "Disagreements aren't personal ... I don't attack people; I attack ideas ... and some very good people have some very bad ideas."

Scalia saw behind Ginsberg's ideas to Ginsberg the person. He didn't confuse *her* with her views, and, because of his discernment, knew how to disagree without losing sight of the person with whom he disagreed. His response reminds me of the time God guided Samuel to pass over David's brothers and instead choose David as Israel's king:

1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected (the brothers); for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

God saw beyond outward appearances to the heart ... and honored David's heart. Scalia saw behind outward disagreement to Ginsberg's heart .. and honored her heart. They could disagree agreeably. Would that we all would learn this wise skill. How profoundly our culture would change if we stopped letting someone's "surface" blind us to their value.

How About You?

Do you know how to respect those who think differently or act differently than you do? You don't have to imitate someone who differs from you (and often you shouldn't), but God does call you to respect them and to remember the inner dignity He has given each person on earth.

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Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. #Antonin Scalia