



Continuing the Conversation

The Search of the Common Good Season 3, Episode 1

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

Questions for reflection and/or group conversations

1. Describe what you think is meant when someone speaks of “the common good”?
2. Read the following two paragraphs. How do you think President Lincoln would have defined the common good?
 - a. As the Civil War loomed on the horizon, President Abraham Lincoln, seeking to preserve the United States, brought his first inaugural address to a close with these words: “We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”
 - b. Four years later with the Civil War drawing to a close, Lincoln bracketed his presidency with the final words of his second inaugural address: “With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”
3. It’s early in the season, but can you envision one or more actions that would reflect Lincoln’s words, “With malice toward none, with charity for all.”

Resources for further study (mentioned in podcast)

- Chrisman, David. "Bending the Moral Arc: Pursuing Hope Over Fear." *Abiding Relevance* (T.B. Maston Foundation, September 2026).
- Hunter, James Davison. *Democracy and Solidarity: On the Cultural Roots of America’s Political Crisis*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2024.
- Meacham, Jon. *American Struggle: Democracy, Dissent, and the Pursuit of a More Perfect Union*. New York: Random House, 2026.
- Meacham, Jon. *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*. New York: Random House, 2018.