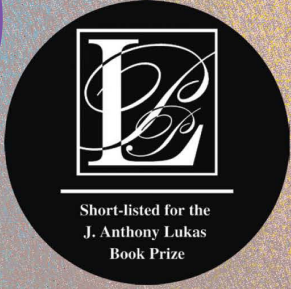


CHURCH  
READING  
GROUP  
GUIDE



# End Bias

"Jessica Nordell's powerful book is a  
breakthrough." —ADAM GRANT,  
author of *Think Again*

Jessica Nordell

# The of

*A Beginning*

---

HOW WE ELIMINATE  
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS  
AND CREATE A  
MORE JUST WORLD

---



## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION

### PART 1

## INTRODUCTION & CHAPTER 1: THE CHASE

1. How did reading this section affect your understanding of unconscious bias? Which examples resonated with or surprised you most and why?
2. The author contends that individuals expressing bias are engaging with an expectation, not reality: they see “a person-shaped daydream.” Discuss an instance when you approached someone with expectations that turned out to be incorrect. Can you identify the origins of those expectations? What happened next?
3. How might bias show up in church spaces? Where might there be opportunities to combat bias within our communities?

## CHAPTER 2: INSIDE THE BIASED BRAIN

4. In her “yellow shirt” studies, psychologist Rebecca Bigler found that emphasizing categories can increase discrimination. How has our church emphasized categories of people? What effect has this had?
5. In John 7:24, we read, “Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.” What factors make this so difficult, in your view?
6. This chapter describes how stories influence our development of stereotypes. Which traditional biblical stories might contribute to the development of stereotypes about women or other groups? How do you think we should approach these stories?

## CHAPTER 3: HOW MUCH DOES EVERYDAY BIAS MATTER?

7. Were you surprised by the findings of the NormCorp. Simulation? Why or why not? How might these findings apply to other organizations or communities?
8. Nordell describes how the homogeneity of leaders can have far-reaching consequences. Church leaders have traditionally been men. Do you think this has impacted their interpretation of Christian teachings? If so, in what way? If not, why not?

### PART 2

## CHAPTER 4: BREAKING THE HABIT

9. The author argues that unconscious biased behavior need not be permanent. Do you agree? Why or why not?
10. Have you noticed yourself becoming more aware of your own unexamined biases while reading this book? Which biases are becoming more noticeable?

## CHAPTER 5: THE MIND, THE HEART, THE MOMENT

11. Which findings from the chapters on policing stood out most to you? Did these chapters change your perspective on police reform? Do you feel more hopeful, less hopeful, or did you have another response entirely?
12. Chronic stress, the author writes, “creates a perfect storm for bias.” Can you think of a time when stress, fatigue, or other impairments led you or someone else to discriminate more?
13. In this chapter, we see the way defensiveness can interrupt the potential for change. Have you ever responded with defensiveness around this topic, and if so, what might limit defensiveness in yourself or others?

## CHAPTER 6: THE WATTS JIGSAW

14. Contact theory suggests that specific kinds of meaningful, collaborative connections with others can combat stereotyping. Were you persuaded by the Watts police example? What might this approach imply for structuring interfaith initiatives?
15. In this chapter, the author suggests that creating *more* mental categories for others, rather than fewer, can help limit our biases. What do you think of this idea? Have you ever found that creating *more* categories has helped you see others more clearly?
16. In John 13:34, we read, “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Connie Rice’s approach grew out of her goal of getting police to love the communities they serve. Is this realistic? What role should love play in our public institutions?

## CHAPTER 7: DESIGNING FOR FLAWED HUMANS

17. Have you witnessed or experienced bias in a healthcare setting? Does this chapter make you think differently about any experiences your or family members have had?
18. In this chapter, removing bias involves changing processes rather than changing people. Are there ways you or our church might change processes to reduce the possibility of bias? Which processes could be changed?

## CHAPTER 8: DISMANTLING HOMOGENEITY

19. How homogeneous are the groups you belong to? What might change if these became more diverse?
20. The MIT mechanical engineering department developed a creative way to increase diversity among its faculty. What might be some creative ways you, your church, or other organization might increase diversity?

## CHAPTER 9: THE ARCHITECTURE OF INCLUSION

21. What ideas from this chapter could be applied to your own church, workplace, or community? Which seem most feasible and why?
22. Gianmarco Monsellato claims that leaders benefit from people who are not like them, because they'll challenge the leaders most, and better decisions come from ideas being scrutinized. Do you agree with this statement? Do you see any limitations to this view?

## CHAPTER 10: UNBREAKING CULTURE & CONCLUSION

23. Social norms can alter how people act: if people learn that a particular behavior is normal and popular, they engage in it more. Do you see social norms in the church shifting, and if so, how?
24. Psychiatrists Chester Pierce and Gail Allen have argued that prejudice against children underlies all other forms of oppression, as it “teaches everyone how to be an oppressor.” What do you think of this argument?
25. Which parts of *The End of Bias: A Beginning* resonated most strongly with you? Were there parts you disagreed with, and if so, why? Which themes resonated most strongly with Christian values?
26. Did the book lead to any uncomfortable realizations? If you're willing to share, what did you discover about yourself?
27. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he says, “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” Having read this book, what do you plan to do next, to know others more fully?