

# TALK IT OVER

No Excuses

## BOTTOM LINE

Following Jesus removes our excuses for avoiding people unlike us.

## CONVERSATION STARTER

What's your favorite cold weather food or drink? Where is the coldest place you have ever lived?

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

*What did you hear?*

*What do you think?*

*What will you do?*

## RESOURCES

- The Daily: [newpointe.org/thedaily](http://newpointe.org/thedaily)
- We are most like God when we love like Jesus. by Charles Stanley (56 sec.)

## VERSES AND QUOTES

*You have heard the law that says, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.*  
Matthew 4:43-48 NLT

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:5 NIV*

*Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? Matthew 7:3 NIV*

*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35 NIV*

*“The more honest and truthful I am about what God is still working on in me, the less shocked, unsettled, or offended I should be by what He’s still working on in you. The more aware I am of the things God has yet to change in me, the less offended and uncomfortable I should be with what God has to change in you.” – Dwight Mason*

## TALK IT OVER

We all need the same things, desire the same things, fear the same things. There is no room for self-righteousness. Self-righteousness is a lack of self-awareness. This is a spiritual and psychological fact. How does it convict and challenge you? What excuses do you find in yourself for moving away from awkward and uncomfortable people and situations? “Those who love your law have great peace; nothing will offend them” (Psalm 119:165). This is subject to much misinterpretation. What do you think it means and why? Jesus was not the balance of grace and truth – He was complete grace and complete truth. How do we follow Him in this? Is it possible? How has God helped you change your mindset toward someone or groups of people? Dwight quoted Phillip Yancey: “Christians get very angry toward other Christians who sin differently than they do.” How does this speak to you? Jesus loved and was loved by people who were nothing like Him. He had “in spite of love.” How do we develop that? Is it most challenging with people close or distant from you? In this area, do you most need more wisdom or more courage? Explain.

## ACTION STEP

I will intentionally pray and work with God to be less self-righteous, more self-aware, and more loving, especially in this area: \_\_\_\_\_