

# TALKING POINTS

## I SPEAK JESUS - ENEMIES

### LEARNING IN

To speak like Jesus, we have to first *follow* Jesus. This means we have to live in a way which reflects the character of Jesus - and the character of Jesus is *extraordinary*.

Maybe the most extraordinary (and difficult) command of Jesus is for us to love our enemies. As flawed beings, we see this command as virtually impossible, yet Jesus calls us to it just the same. He calls us to a new ethic, a new way of living.

As 'impossible' as Jesus' command to love our enemies is, it is a command which reflects the fundamental nature of who He is, and what He did for us. Jesus came into our world while we were in rebellion towards God and loved us despite our animosity towards Him. He sacrificed everything for a human race which scorned, tortured and executed Him. He loved His enemies, and He's still doing it today.

Read Matthew 5:43-47

How do you feel about the 'impossible' command to love your enemies?

### LIVING IT OUT

If we're going to genuinely follow Jesus (which is the only way to "Speak Jesus"), we're going to have to be obedient to even His most difficult commands - like loving our enemies. Here are four keys to actually love the people who we are most in conflict with:

**Believe God Has A Purpose For Your Enemies** - whether we know it or not, God can (and does) use our enemies to affect His purposes in our lives. He can use our enemies to produce the growth in us He desires.

Read Romans 8:28

Was there a time when God revealed a greater purpose to you through the actions of an enemy?

**Bless Your Enemies** - The word 'bless' means to 'speak well of' or 'speak well to' – not to curse or to slander an enemy. There's no better way to eliminate an enemy than to make them a friend. Jesus did this with us.

Read Romans 5:8-10, Luke 6:28-29

What is something we could say to "bless" an enemy (and actually mean it)?

**Do Good To Your Enemies** - Jesus' focus is on the soul, not the situation. His primary concern is the healing He wants to see in our souls, not the difficulties we may be in (or even create). We have to remember, our enemies have souls too and we should want their healing as well.

Read Matthew 5:44, Luke 23:34

What would be a good thing you could do to (or for) an enemy?

**Forgive Your Enemies** - Jesus was determined to do the will of the Father, no matter what it cost Him. God's will for us is to forgive *like Jesus did*.

Read Matthew 18:21-22, Luke 23:34

How can we get better at forgiveness, especially of our enemies?