



## DEALING WITH OPINIONATED PEOPLE

In this episode, Nathan and Lacey will be discussing how to love and be in unity with people with whom you disagree with their opinions and viewpoints. They will also redefine what love means.

### INTRODUCTION (00:20)

We live in a polarizing society where people are using the anonymity of the internet to post, repost, tweet, retweet, and comment criticisms to people they've never met. From theology and politics to worship music and Christian musicians, we can find plenty of topics online that people are very passionate about.

1. *How has a someone misinterpreted and misrepresented something you've said or done?*
2. *How did it make you feel when they did this?*

### BEING RIGHT v RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS (01:53)

Topics can become more important than the person that is expressing their opinions on them. We sacrifice the relationship for the sake of being right and making sure our opinion is heard.

3. *How have you seen Christians react to controversial issues?*
4. *What made these responses encouraging or discouraging for those involved?*

### UNITY & CONFORMITY (03:33)

We live in disunity with people when we make their words, opinions, and actions a prerequisite for our love. We unintentionally communicate, "if they believe \_\_\_\_\_, do \_\_\_\_\_, or say \_\_\_\_\_, then they are worthy of our attention, love, and support."

5. *How would you describe the difference between unity and conformity?*
6. *Why do you think it is difficult for Christians to be unified?*

### LOVE IS THE FOUNDATION (04:46)

As mature Christians, we should love all people. This love is a denial of ourselves — our rights, desires, beliefs, and expectations — for the benefit of others. It prefers others without conditions, coercion, expectation, requirement, compulsion, or manipulation. This is how God has loved us.

7. *How have you defined Christian maturity in the past?*

### NEXT STEP (07:13)

For the other person to be free, they must forgive and live in that forgiveness. For some people, no amount of apology will satisfy. You can guard yourself from being hurt by their unwillingness to forgive you by releasing control of how you think they should respond to your apology.

8. *What views, beliefs, or behaviors have you required of others for you to be in relationship with them?*
9. *How do you usually talk about people you disagree with or with whom your opinions differ?*