

CREW Bible Study

Message – LOVE/HATE Week 2

- **BOTTOM LINE:** Let love be your filter.
- **GOAL:** To help students understand the difference between calling someone out and lovingly confronting a hurtful behavior.
- **SCRIPTURE:** *Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.*
– Galatians 6:1

MESSAGE

Have you ever felt thankful that one of your friends gave you a heads up, even if it was awkward to hear? Let's say you have food stuck in your teeth. That can be super embarrassing. And if you're the one seeing it, it's uncomfortable to say something about it. But if you've ever been the one with the food in your teeth, you've probably felt that it was better to know about it and take care of it than to go on for hours not knowing it was there. You were grateful for the heads up.

Telling a friend they have food in their teeth is one thing, but what if it's something bigger? What if it's something like....

- Talking about a relationship – a boyfriend or girlfriend you don't think is good for them.
- Confronting someone about a lie or a rumor.
- Speaking up about bad, dangerous, or addictive behaviors that will only lead to trouble.

Speaking up in situations like these is really difficult. It's hard to decide what to do. You might wonder, "If I say something, will it make me look like a hater? Will saying something ruin this friendship, or possibly even end it? Is it really my place to say anything at all?"

Here's the thing: No one wants to be known as a hater. And nobody wants to come across as the friend who thinks they're so perfect and so amazing that they can tell everybody else what they're doing wrong. But that's not the case here, right? How can you be open and honest, have the difficult conversations, and stand up to say something AND still be perceived as humble and real? You can. It's about grounding the situation in love, not hate.

In fitness training – think weight lifting – there's a person known as a spotter. The spotter is there to help when the weight gets too heaving and the person doing the lifting is no longer able to lift the weight on their own. When that happens, the spotter steps in and helps to carry the weight too. The spotter carries the burden along with the person doing the lifting to keep them safe and prevent injury.

Or in gymnastics, the spotter is there to assist the gymnast to safely complete a skill. The spotter stands by, ready to step in and guide - or even carry - the gymnast to land safely.

When it comes to speaking up to a friend and helping them avoid hurtful behavior, THIS is what we should be thinking. A form of spotting.

In our message last week, Paul had some great advice for the Ephesians about gossip. Today, we're looking at another letter Paul wrote. This one was to a church in the region of Galatia, where modern day Turkey is now. Paul gave this insight to them, in Galatians chapter 6, verse 1...

Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.

Paul tells the Galatians that if they have any friends who share the same values as they do, but slip up and do something that is harmful, it's their responsibility to help that person get back on the right track. And this is great insight for all of us as followers of Jesus today. Paul is saying that you and I should do the same with our friends. If we notice something, we should say something. But not only that. We should help guide that person to get back on track to be the best version of themselves. We should spot them. We should help them land safely.

Paul cared deeply for the people of Galatia, which is why he wrote what he did. He knew that the most loving thing isn't always the easiest thing to do. But we owe it to each other to speak up. Because the truth is, we need each other. Not just to point out where we go off track, but to come alongside of us and help carry the burden a little bit to get us back to the place we should be. It's not about pointing fingers, it's about pointing out the right direction.

So, what is this supposed to look like? Well, when it comes to what you say and how you help others, remember this....let love be your filter.

Think of it sort of like an Instagram photo filter. A photo filter doesn't inherently change the picture, just the tone of it. Filters are meant to enhance the image, to give a different dimension to the picture. Think of love being the filter you choose on what you think, what you say and what you do to help a friend get back on track. Here's three things to keep in mind:

1. **Let love be the filter for your involvement.** When you aren't sure if you should get involved in a friend's situation or not, ask yourself this: "What's the most loving thing I can do for this person?" This helps you check yourself and your motives to be sure you're acting out of love and not something else.
2. **Let love be the filter for your words.** Ask, "How would I want someone to speak to me, and *what* would I want him or her to say if I were in this situation?" This helps you be sure you're not just throwing shade to make

yourself look right and that person look wrong. It helps you choose words that show that you are there to help get them back on track.

3. **Let love be the filter for your actions and reactions.** If you have a friend who is having a hard time keeping his or her life headed in the right direction, chances are they won't just need your words, they'll need your help. Ask yourself, "What would I want someone to do for me in love if I were in this situation?" Filtering your actions and reactions through love will help you choose a careful response.

Imagine how different your friend circle, your school, your community, and even our world would be if more people thought through their involvement with others. What would it look like if more people paused to find words and actions that speak love, not hate? And what if they came along side one another to spot?

When you let love be your filter, you can humbly and gently guide others back on track.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Do you have a favorite photo filter? A favorite filter you use on Instagram or Snapchat? What makes you choose that certain filter?
2. Think about filters in terms of what you say and do. What are some filters that are used when you're around different people, or in certain places or situations?
3. What are some situations a friend could be in where it might be difficult to get involved or speak up?
4. How can you tell the difference between being judgmental about a friend's behavior and being genuinely concerned for them?
5. Read Galatians 6:1. What does it look like to gently and humbly help someone back on track?
6. Have you ever played a sport where you had a spotter? Was there a situation where you were glad they were there to help you?
7. We can be "spotters" for each other and help carry the burden to help get someone back on track. Has there been a time in your life where you've seen this happen?
8. Do you know anyone who does a good job of filtering his or her involvement, words, and actions through love? What stands out about this person?
9. What are some ground rules you can use to help you speak the truth in love to one another?
10. What is the difference between helping to carry someone's burden and enabling them to continue their hurtful and bad behavior? Who can you turn to for help when helping a friend becomes too much for you?