



WEEK THREE • 11.12

## CONVERSATION with ANDY STANLEY

### INTRODUCTION

Is it possible to disagree politically and love unconditionally? In week 3 of our *Not In It to Win It* series, Pastor Jesse had a conversation with Andy Stanley, Founder and Pastor of North Point Ministries and author of the book *Not In It to Win It* (the inspiration behind our series), about the themes of politics and division he's seen in American Christianity.

Remember: As a No Matter church, you likely have people who land across the political spectrum in your group. Don't assume everyone is in the same spot. Before you get started, commit to creating a safe place to process this content together by keeping the main thing the main thing and acknowledging each other's different perspectives and experiences.

### DISCUSSION

1. Pastor Andy shared that people were leaving his church "not because of difference in theology or worship style, but for 'not taking a stand' on a particular [political] issue." Have you noticed any shifts in your community's unity related to political issues? How might this impact the church?
2. Pastor Andy also shared that, "A lot of Christians have cloaked their desire to have their way in the world (to win) with Christianity." Take a moment to reflect on your own priorities. Is there a desire to win - politically or in general - in your life right now that may be impacting your representation of Jesus as a Christian? Share with your group.
3. **Read Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:10, 12:16, Galatians 6:2, Ephesians 4:2, Philippians 2:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, and Hebrews 10:24-25.** We get to choose whether we follow Jesus, but we don't get to choose what following Jesus looks like. When facing political differences, does your approach reflect the teachings in the verses above?
4. How does Pastor Andy's quote, "The issue is not, 'Do we care?' The issue is, 'What approach do we take because we care.'" impact you? What might change if verses like the ones you read in the previous question shaped us more than any other priority?
5. Explore your role in creating unity together. How might your sense of individualism (having my way) be contributing to division? What steps can you take to contribute to Christian unity at a time when individualism and division are a cultural norm?

### APPLICATION

- **Remember "me cannot survive without we."** We've created a lot of artificial independence in our lives today. Our unity will provide the world with a picture of what God is actually able to do in the lives of people who love him.
- **Remember your values.** When you think about the person furthest away from you politically, remember you likely have the same values. We have common ground in the love for our families, concern for our health, and futures. When we focus on those, we can make progress.
- **Remember we have more opportunity than ever.** Let your light shine so people see your good works (reactions motivated by the Holy Spirit) and give God the credit.

### RESOURCE

*Not In It to Win It* by Andy Stanley