



WEEK FOUR • 11.19

SOMETIMES WINNING MEANS LOSING

INTRODUCTION

Is it possible to disagree politically and love unconditionally? In the final week of our *Not In It to Win It* series, Pastor Jesse taught us about why Jesus would lose on purpose, with a purpose, by leading with mercy and how we are to follow His example for others.

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 Jesse referenced the Michael Jordan documentary *The Last Dance*. Jordan had to win. Failure was not an option. Some of us are like Mike, while others of us are wired differently. Where do you land on the spectrum of competitiveness?
2. **Revisit and read John 8:1-11.** Imagine being one of the accusers in this story. They were honestly certain they were doing the right thing, but Jesus threw a curveball and told them to go home. Discuss how you would have felt in their situation.
3. Christian culture can get stuck on "right vs. wrong." Jesus teaches that someone is more important than something. For the woman caught in adultery, he offers mercy first when the law of the time demanded she pay for her sin. Tell of a time when you (or someone you know) offered mercy to someone who didn't deserve it.
4. Jesus didn't offer the woman mercy because her actions didn't matter. He's honest about her sin and tells her to "sin no more." Jesus leads with mercy first, then speaks truth into her life personally and privately. Gently and lovingly. How might our desire and approach to "fixing" or helping others differ from what Jesus models here? Discuss what you're learning from his example.
5. Pastor Jesse taught that, "Leading with mercy is choosing to lose. But it's choosing to lose on purpose, with a purpose. And when you choose to lose, you just might win the right to personally, gently, but clearly tell someone the truth about what they're doing. And maybe, they'll change their mind, change their direction, and allow God to change their heart." Share a time when you were able to hear God's truth, and it changed your heart because someone cared enough about you to lose.

APPLICATION

- **Remember to pray.** If you feel the need to argue, challenge, or just win with others, start in prayer, asking God to help you see them through His eyes.
- **Remember to be gentle.** Proverbs 15:1 says, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a but a harsh word stirs up anger."
- **Remember Jesus shows us mercy first, and we get to pay it forward.** James 2:12-13 says, "Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment."