



WISDOMFEST 2025



Our goal is to answer this question:
How do I skillfully approach others in a
conversation to give the best opportunity of
a **gospel-centered outcome**?

Control seeks to **direct**;
curiosity seeks to **discover**.

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Control seeks **outcomes**;
curiosity seeks **connection**.

Three types of conversations:

1. How to lean into conflict with **humility**

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3. How to engage across differences with **grace**

1. How to Lean into Conflict with Humility

Big Idea: Moving from **defensiveness** to gospel-driven dialogue

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,
but in humility count others more significant
than yourselves.

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Philippians 2:3-4

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,

“bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

“And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

Colossians 3:12-14

Humility that comes through abiding in Jesus
makes space for God's work.

I don't have to win (**control**).

Humility that comes through abiding in Jesus
makes space for God's work.

I don't have to win. (**control**)

I am free to love well. (**curiosity**)

O-I-C → Observe

O-I-C → Observe - Interpret

O-I-C → Observe - Interpret - Clarify

2. How to Navigate Awkward Moments with Courage

Big Idea: Choosing **presence** over **polish** in the messiness of real connection

“Love one another with brotherly affection.
Outdo one another in showing honor.”

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with
those who weep.”

Romans 12:10, 15

Why must we navigate awkward moments
with courage?

Courage that comes through abiding in Jesus offers us the freedom to stay present and loving (**curiosity**) rather than retreating or managing the moment for our own comfort (**control**).

“Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise,

“having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

Ephesians 2:12-13

3. How to Engage Across Differences with Grace

Big Idea: See others through the lens of **grace** instead of **sameness**. Sameness feels safe.

“Let your speech always be gracious,
seasoned with salt, so that you may know
how you ought to answer each person.”

Colossians 4:6

“But the wisdom from above is first pure,
then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full
of mercy and good fruits, impartial and
sincere.”

James 3:17

Why must we engage across differences with grace?

Grace that comes through abiding in Jesus quiets my ego, softens my heart, and helps me love and listen to people (**curiosity**) more than being right (**control**).

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

“I am the vine; you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

John 15:1, 4-5, 11

Jesus says, “Apart from me you can do nothing.”

nothing (oo-dice') =
nothing, not even one thing

“The vine is Christ, I am the branch. The Holy Spirit is the sap that runs from the vine into the branch. The branch lives, grows, and bears fruit not by struggles and effort but simply by abiding.

“Branches were not designed to produce fruit - they were designed to have fruit produced through them.”

Charles Stanley
The Wonderful Spirit-Filled Life

What I really need isn't simply **techniques**; I need **Jesus** to form in me what I don't have on my own.