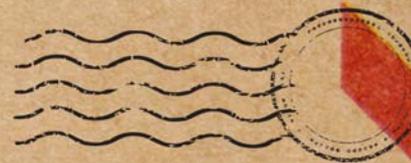




May 21 & 22

## Crucial Conversations

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### Introduction

In our series *Wish You Were Here*, we are exploring the importance of moving toward healthy personal relationships that bring about spiritual growth in ourselves and others: forgiving past hurts, connecting with compassion, creating healthy boundaries. But, what about those difficult and *crucial conversations* where we actually put those first things into practice? This week, Pastor John helps us see how we often avoid such conversations, why we need to have them and what steps can help ensure those conversations are God-centered and have a lasting and positive impact on our relationships with others.

### Discussion

1. Read **John 3:1-21** about a crucial conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus. What were some things that made this discussion unusual? What was the ultimate *purpose* of the conversation? Now read **John 19:38-42**. What do these verses tell you about the *impact* of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus?
2. Think of that conversation you need to have with someone in your life. Talk about what makes that discussion so important to have. Discuss what *first* step you can take to move toward having that conversation [Set a time? Choose a place? Forgive? Establish a connection? Set a boundary?],
3. God fills our lives with windows of opportunity for connecting to and loving others. Has there been an opportunity for a life-giving conversation you feel you missed and wish you had back? Consider discussing it with someone or your group as a way to encourage each other to take action today.

### Think About It

Early in Jesus' ministry, not long after He had begun to train his twelve disciples, He sent them out in pairs to have crucial conversations with people in the nearby towns and cities. He warned them their presence may not be welcomed, they may instead be arrested or even beaten on account of their message. But, He reassured them [**John 10:19-20**] saying, "Do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you." We are not alone in our communication with others. We have God's help if we are willing to ask for it, hear it and use it. And, on top of this, we don't have to worry, because it is God's work; we are simply His messenger, and He will give us *what* we need *when* we need it.

### Do Something

1. *Pregame*: Fill in the blank: I need to have that crucial conversation with \_\_\_\_\_. Pray for God to prepare you, break down your tendency to avoid the interaction, give you a love for that person He placed in your life and shape your motives to reflect His.
2. *Game Day*: Check to see you are clear about what issue needs attention. Pray that God will give you a clear understanding of the truth and the courage to speak it in love. Consider what the lasting outcome can be for moving this relationship to a better place, both here on earth and even unto eternal life!
3. *Postgame*: Follow up on your conversation by asking some simple questions and then listening: How do you feel about our conversation yesterday? What is the next step? How can I help? Ask God to use you to bring His work to completion through you.

