

## **Finding Common Ground**

### **Ready:**

“Therefore, let us no longer judge one another. Instead decide never to put a stumbling block or pitfall in the way of your brother or sister.” – Romans 14:13

### **Set**

In basketball, one debate has stood the test of time: Who is the greatest of all time, Micheal Jordan or LeBron James? People have been debating, writing and making movies, all trying to find the correct answer.

I have seen this debate unfold with friends and soon turn ugly enough to hurt a friendship that was perfectly fine before. What started as a debate concerning opinions around basketball quickly turned into a fight about values, morals and personality. Both of these friends were dragged into saying hurtful comments that ended in anger and sinful actions.

Some aspects of our faith that we should hold in high regard are non-negotiables called doctrine. Only some things we believe or have been brought up with are considered Christian doctrine. Some of the things we believe come from tradition or our denomination. Some churches have modern music, and some sing hymns; some do communion each Sunday, and some do it once a month.

Paul warns us in Romans that there are some things we should believe for ourselves and not try to change our brother and sister in Christ. He warns that if we push on every issue that is different than ours, it may cause us and our brother to stumble into sin. Just like a harmless debate on the best basketball player quickly turned into two people sinning against one another, the same can happen in our faith.

Make sure you stand up for the things within your faith that are doctrine and true but try not to worry about winning the argument on every difference between you and another believer. Instead, listen to why they do what they do and see if you can find a common ground of the love of the Lord to agree upon.

### **Go**

- What is considered Christian doctrine?
- Do you have strong beliefs on issues that are not doctrine? Why?
- Have you ever stumbled into arrogance because of your own opinion?

### **Workout**

Ephesians 4:29

1 Thessalonians 5:11

### **Overtime**

“God, You have given us Your Word to help us know what is true. Help us to hold strong convictions on what is true and not what we think should be true. Give us compassion to listen to the ways of our brothers and sisters and not cause them or ourselves to stumble unnecessarily into sin. Help us to continue to build up Your Kingdom. Amen.”



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