

# BECOMING LOVE

H O L I N E S S I N 2 0 2 0

## Talk-It-Over: Week 8

### With Open Arms

There are many sources of conflict within the christian church. Some of these arguments have some basis in theology, particularly when it comes down to how literally you interpret the text in the bible. Most often however, the disagreements are not based in some weird theological argument, but more often in some area of practice or behaviour.

For instance the conflict between evolutionary christians and creationist christians has its roots in how literally one interprets the first two chapters of book of Genesis. The debate between whether or not women should be allowed to preach and teach in the church comes down to how you interpret a few verses written by Paul to a church in Corinth. The debate around divorce is based on how you understand a select few statements of Jesus.

Our behaviour is often related to what we believe the bible to say. There are times, however, where behaviour simply becomes confused with faith. The Salvation Army was, and is, an abstinence movement. It believes that the way our society consumes alcohol is unhealthy and leads to an increase in many social problems. In response to this many of us have taken a vow to avoid the consumption of alcohol. This is fine, but only a few decades ago some Salvationists could be heard to express disdain and disappointment in someone who chose to consume alcohol. People who decided to drink alcohol were treated very differently by those who had previously been mentors, comrades and colleagues.

### Read:

**Romans 14**

### Questions:

1. What were some of the written or unwritten rules Christians used to think were so important, but which don't seem to be any more?
2. What are the issues that tend to be divisive in the church now?
3. How do you react when you encounter someone with loud views that you don't agree with? (v1)
4. Have you ever been to a wedding or other event where you've had to sit in assigned seat with people you didn't know at the table? How did it go? (v2-4)
5. How do you "tend to your own knitting?" (v12)

6. How do we “use all our energy in getting along with each other?” (v19-21)
7. How do we defend the vulnerable and marginalised who are put-off or even hurt by other christians? (v15-16)

### **Prayer Time:**

Pray for renewed understanding of God's love and the freedom it gives us.

Pray for protection against the temptation to live a conservative, fearful faith.

Pray for strength to get along with all people God has invited to his table.

### **Further Reading:**

1 Corinthians 8:1-13