



SAYING “NO” TO DIVISION & DEBATES Avoiding & Discouraging False Truth

Every one of us brings a wide variety of thoughts, attitudes, and questions to camp and we have a remarkable opportunity to model Christlikeness. The ever-changing temperature in today’s culture brings us a unique challenge as Christian leaders: recognizing the power of stories and questions to unite rather than divide. (See the “Oneness Principle” in John 17:20-23.) Students are bombarded daily with messages and opinions, whether it be LGBTQ, abortion, gay marriage, racism, gender identity, antisemitism, or even arguments about politics. These are all issues that beg to be debated and argued; subjects so filled with emotion that “winning” threatens to erase “witness.”

While we must remain diligent to uphold and never waiver from God’s Word or the message we are called to bring to our students, we must also recognize that Jesus never entered into a debate or sought to win an argument. Instead, He asked penetrating questions and told thought provoking stories. We should follow His example! Here are some suggestions about ways to handle these types of conversations lovingly and constructively, without condemnation or judgement.

- Lovingly guide them to seek out what scripture has to say.
- Stay away from sharing opinions or personal preferences; stick to truth and acknowledge “gray” areas
- There is no such thing as “your truth” and “my truth!” All truth belongs to God!!
- Don’t put too much focus on the divisive issues; the main purpose is to lead students into a vibrant relationship with Jesus.
- Value relationships over being right by making sure differences are not the focus

If at any time you feel that you need some assistance working through circumstances or issues that our students might present, there are many resources for you at camp. Please seek us out:

- Spiritual life team: Jim Eschenbrenner and Kim White
- Dorm Parents: Andrew Faulkner and Audra Morris
- Tri-State Leadership Group: Ryan Foust, Jim Eschenbrenner, Travis Morriss, Anthony Chilton

Any one of us will be glad to help guide you and better serve and love each other.