



Week One: Conflict God's Way – Study Guide

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Ever wonder how conflict fits into the big picture of life? It appears to be something that none of us can avoid, and for some, it happens with frequency. How can we best handle relational adversity when it comes? Relationships are messy, yet they are one of the most wonderful gifts we have. This week we look into the Bible to better understand what Jesus teaches about this, and how we can be at peace with God and each other in our daily lives.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) How would you describe the way you personally handle conflict with other people? Are you quick to try and understand them, or are you quick to prove your side of the story?
- 2) Have you ever experienced forgiveness, either from someone, or toward someone?

Into the Bible

- 3) Read **Romans 12:16-21**. We see in verses 16 and 18 that we are to live in harmony, and peaceably with all. What does it mean in verse 18 where it states, "so far as it depends on you?" Give an example of what it means not to repay evil for evil.

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- 4) Read **Luke 6:27-32**. Who are enemies? What is Jesus trying to get us to understand by saying, "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that?" Do you currently feel you are capable of loving an "enemy" in your own life?

- 5) Jesus upped the ante on murder when He placed it in likeness with anger and hatred of one another. What does **James 4:1-6** instruct is the cause of quarrels? What is the specific instruction in **James 4:11-12**? Why have some people bought into the idea that our words aren't as harmful as how God sees it?

How Does This Apply?

- 6) Sometimes conflict is not as black and white as we would hope. Dealing with "gray area" conflict can be extremely difficult. To complicate things just a bit further, our common sense and opinions of our peers don't always align with God's pathway to restoration and peace. Read **Philippians 4:4-9**. During certain times of conflict someone may not be directly assaulting you, but you may still feel uneasy toward them, and have lost peace in the relationship. What clues do you see in these verses that help us get back to that peace within ourselves and with God? How do you think finding the "peace of God" can spur on the beginnings of restoration and forgiveness?

- 7) Now let's take a look at conflict that is very black and white. Sometimes conflicts can blindsides us out of nowhere; we suddenly realize we are in the midst of a full-blown collision. Read **Luke 6:29** and **Proverbs 16:18-21**. Often the best thing to do is

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simply walk away. If that is not possible, then a compromise may be in order on your part. This is not a compromise on your values, but a compromise with your pride. As a group, discuss some examples of how to practically do this. Act it out if your group wants to. Please do not give real names of people involved if the situation actually happened.

Prayer Focus

This series, we are praying for the "It Starts Now" event starting the weekend of November 16 and 17. Specifically, please be praying for:

- 300 Salvations
- 200 Neighborhood Experiences
- 1,000 First Time Guests

Also, please continue to pray for the new Statesville Campus location, for the funding needed for renovations and the opening on November 17.

Increase Your Learning on Your Own

- 8) We understand from the teachings and examples of Christ, that in the same way He has forgiven us from all our faults and disobedience, we should extend the same grace to everyone around us. This is best lived out in how we freely love and offer forgiveness through our daily conflicts with one another. So, what is it that we are really forgiving, since Jesus has already forgiven sin? We use this terminology to simply state that we are not allowing ourselves to block love from one another. With this in mind, read **Ephesians 6:10-13**. What is the accurate perspective on the conflicts we are having with our friends, spouses, coworkers, and ministry partners?