

A wingman not only cares about their friend, but also about that friend's relationships. This is next-level friendship. Although we may not want to get ourselves into a messy situation, our willingness and sacrifice could have a significant impact on our friends' lives. In this study we will dig into the factors at play and get to some tangible steps we can each take to be a wingman for our friends.

1. Share some examples of relationship conflict you have seen in your friends. How did you respond when you found out? Do you think it was right or wrong?

“For this perhaps is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back forever, no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother—”
Philemon 15-16a (ESV)

2. **Read Philemon 15.** Paul is helping Philemon to keep his eyes on the horizon.

- Is there a situation you can think of where a conflict between two people turned out to be a healthy thing, ultimately leaving a stronger relationship?
- What kinds of encouragement do you think God would want us to make as a wingman, to keep our friend's eyes ahead on a positive future? Give hypothetical conflict examples and what we might say to them, or share specific examples and look for advice from the group.

3. **Read Philemon 16-17.** Paul here is reframing Philemon's view of Onesimus, something we must do for our friends in conflict. He is helping them see each other as allies, not enemies.

- Why do you think it is so hard to change our view of someone? Have you ever done it successfully?
- **Read Matthew 5:44-45.** Discuss how God sees people versus how we see people. What are some things you can do to view people more like God does? What difference will it make?

“If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account.” Philemon 18 (ESV)

4. **Read Philemon 18-19.** Paul is willing to pay the price so that Onesimus can be free.

- Have you ever stepped into someone else’s conflict and it cost you something? What did it cost? Was it worth it?
- How does knowing that Jesus paid the price for you help you better understand why and how to do it for your friends?

5. As you close, pray with one another specifically for your friends who are in conflict and for the wisdom to move them towards forgiveness and restoration.