



NAC-USA  
DEVELOPMENT  
INSTITUTE

**Responding  
to Conflict**

**Glorify God  
and Get the  
Log Out of  
Your Eye**

**Gently  
Restore and  
Go and Be  
Reconciled**

# MIDWEEK GUIDE

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**2016**

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July

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Your small group does not need to answer every question provided in the Midweek guides. There are a range of questions so that each group can answer questions that are applicable to them and that they are comfortable with. Also, take your time with discussing the questions and don't feel the need to rush through them in order to answer every one.

A portion of this content was taken from Peacemaker Ministries and the small group materials, Resolving Everyday Conflict. Peacemaker Ministries was founded in 1982 and has developed educational resources, seminars, and conciliation training to help Christians learn how to serve God as peacemakers in the conflicts they encounter in everyday life. For more information, visit [www.peacemaker.net](http://www.peacemaker.net).

# 2016 July

## MIDWEEK GUIDE

### Session 1: Responding to Conflict

#### Bible References

Genesis 4:1-9  
Proverbs 10:11  
Romans 12:18

#### Going Deeper

Overlooking minor offenses  
(Proverbs 19:11)

*The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression.*

• When someone has offended you, a wonderful question to ask is, "Can I overlook this?" Many conflicts can be quickly resolved if we are willing to overlook. It is an act of love to extinguish a fire before it ever starts.

(continued on next page)

1. What was Cain's issue with his brother? Did Abel seem to be aware of the problem?

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2. Read Genesis 3:8-13.

a. Whom did Adam blame for his sin? How did he even try to put some of that responsibility on to God? Why does that never work?

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b. In what ways have you tried to hide from God after you've sinned? How has that proven to be futile?

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3. Why does Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount that peacemakers will be blessed?

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## Going Deeper

Overlooking offenses is appropriate under three conditions:

1. The offense should not have created a wall between you and the other person or caused you to feel differently toward him or her for more than a short period of time.
2. The offense should not be causing serious harm.
3. The offense is not part of a destructive pattern.

**Escape responses** are directed at getting away from the conflict rather than resolving it.

- **Denial:** Pretend that a conflict does not exist or refuse to do what you should do to resolve it properly. This is always a wrong response to a conflict.

- **Flight:** Run away from the person with whom you are having a conflict. Flight is more than escaping – it is avoiding facing a problem.

**Attack responses** are directed at placing as much pressure as possible on your opponent in order to win.

- **Blame:** We attempt to shift responsibility for the conflict away from ourselves, by blaming the conflict on the other person. Blame often turns to gossip when we talk about others rather than speaking to them directly. Gossip seeks to win others to our side as we “try our case” in the court of public opinion by talking to lots of people.

- **Assault:** We use force or intimidation (e.g., physical, verbal, or financial) to try to make an opponent give in to our demands. We might try to force our opponents to give in to our demands by taking them to court.

4. What type of response do you tend to lean towards when in a conflict? Why do you think you generally respond to conflict in this way?

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5. Why do some people believe if you ignore a problem long enough, it will go away? What usually happens instead?

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6. What are the possible outcomes of an “escape response” to conflict?

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7. What is it about taking responsibility for a problem that can be so difficult for many people? What’s at stake for them?

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8. What are the possible outcomes of an “attack response” to conflict?

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9. In the video, the apostle mentioned, “blame can quickly turn to gossip when we talk about others rather than speaking to them directly.” Share some thoughts and tips with the group on how to stop and even prevent gossip.

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10. Do you allow people to share gossip with you? Why or why not?

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## Session 2: Glorify God and Get the Log Out of Your Eye

### Bible References

Acts 15:36-41  
Matthew 7:3-5  
Romans 7:15-25

### Going Deeper

**Glorify God** (1 Corinthians 10:31)

*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

- Practically speaking: Obey Him and imitate Him by loving others, showing mercy, laying down "rights," forgiving, and loving sacrificially.

**Get the Log out of your own eye** (Matthew 7:3-5)

*And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

- Jesus doesn't forbid helping others who have a speck in their eye, but this is not where you start. He wants you to do something you wouldn't naturally do: focus FIRST on your own contribution to the conflict.

- Even if you are only responsible for 2% of the conflict, you're 100% responsible for your 2%.

- One helpful thing about "getting the log out" is that the first admission tends to trigger an admission from the other direction. People tend to treat you the way you treat them.

1. Why do you think Paul and Barnabas were not able to resolve the issue? What could have happened to change the situation?

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2. Why can't "going our separate ways" be the long-term solution to our conflicts?

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3. Can God be glorified through all conflicts?

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4. What is it that God wants in regard to our relationships – not only with Him, but also with others?

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5. Jim comes home from work. He seems sullen and distracted. Susan's had a hard day herself: she got home late from work, realized that she had forgotten to plan for dinner, and now Jim sticks his head into the kitchen wondering how much longer dinner will be. At this pivotal moment: What responses would not glorify God? What responses would glorify God?

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6. Read Matthew 7:3-5. What does Jesus say you will be able to do if you first take responsibility for your contribution to an ongoing conflict?

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7. Perhaps a modern phrase of ‘Get the plank out of your own eye’ would be “take a long hard look in the mirror.” What do you see when you look in the mirror? What do you think God sees?

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8. “Even if we are only responsible for 2% of the conflict, we’re 100% responsible for our 2%.” Our “2%” in a conflict could even just be that we used an attack response. What are ways that we avoid responsibility for the 2%?

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9. How should the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts be evident in the ways we relate with other people?

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## Session 3: Gently Restore and Go and Be Reconciled

### Bible References

Matthew 16:21-23  
Matthew 26:31-35, 75  
John 13:3-9  
John 18:15-18, 25-27  
John 21:15-19

### Going Deeper

*When we strive against all thoughts of revenge; when we will not do our enemies mischief, but wish well to them, grieve at their calamities, pray for them, seek reconciliation with them, and show ourselves ready on all occasions to relieve them. This is gospel forgiving.*

- Thomas Watson

1. At the lake, why do you think Jesus didn’t ask Peter about his denial?

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2. Jesus “gently restores” Peter’s relationship with Him. When we go to gently restore our relationship with someone after a conflict, that means we go with a heart of love for them, not in confrontation, and we go with the goal of restoring the relationship, not with the intent of anger or vengeance. Why is gentleness necessary when moving forward to restore and reconcile a relationship with someone?

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## Going Deeper

### Gently Restore (Galatians 6:1)

*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

- Clearly communicating how another person's words and actions have impacted you sets the stage for deeper levels of reconciliation. Gently restoring is going to the other person gently in order to restore their relationship with God and with the people they've hurt; the purpose is redemptive.

- o Go with a heart of love for the other person, not in confrontation.
- o Go with the goal of a restored relationship between the two of you, not in anger or vengeance.
- o Go to lead them away from sin.
- o Go gently, not in a self-righteous spirit.
- o Go in love or don't go at all.

### Go and be reconciled (Ephesians 4:32)

*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

- It is important to remember that a lasting solution will always be a combination of the resolution of the issue and the reconciliation of the relationship, which comes through forgiveness.
- Forgiveness is a decision modeled after God's forgiveness of us – a decision not to hold an offense against the offender.

3. From the video: *In the conversation that happens by the lake, Peter realizes how deeply Jesus loves him, and he is aware of how many times Jesus could have given up on him. He experiences firsthand the type of love that Jesus is calling him to.* How would you describe this love?

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4. What are some unhealthy motives for wanting to confront someone?

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5. Read Luke 22:60-62. How did Peter interpret the look that Jesus gave him? How do you feel when you realize that you have broken your relationship with someone?

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6. All 4 "G's" are action verbs. Why do you think that is?

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7. Can you ever know the whole story of a conflict?

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8. What role does the Holy Spirit play when it comes to genuine repentance?

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9. How can an unwillingness to move toward forgiveness affect our relationship with God?

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