



**November 16, 2011**

CONFLICT- Conflict with God

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## Leader Notes

We live in a society that is chock full of conflict. Our students face it in almost every aspect of their days. In our quest to help our students become 'thinkers' we are going to seek out God's truth on the topic, and give them tools to help navigate the ins and outs of the various forms of conflict they are probably facing as they sit before you during your time together on Wednesday night.

Listen well, don't undermine parents, friends, authority, or God- and try and walk in their shoes!

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## Opening Prayer

*Make sure you take time each week to open in prayer.*

It sets a precedent for your students to expect, and invites the Holy Spirit into the presence of your group. Feel free to use this area to write down notes, or things you want to be sure to hit in your prayer as you open your time together.

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## KICKER

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**Leader:** Pick 2 volunteers. Ask one to make up a problem with the other one- a reason that he or she is mad at the other person. This can be silly or serious. Without saying it aloud, the "angry" person should write that reason down on a card and give it to you. (Make sure its appropriate) Then the other person gets to ask 20 yes or no questions to determine the problem. Perhaps the group would like to suggest questions along the way.

**Have you ever felt someone was mad at you, but you didn't know why? When How?**

**You could segue by saying something like this:**

Communication is crucial in these situations. It's difficult, but it clears the air. If you say what the problem is, then both of you can take steps to address it. The same thing is true in our relationship with God. Often we get mad at God, but we're afraid to do so. Or we fear that he's mad at us. Either way, communication is the key to restoring the relationship.

**Kicker Notes:**

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# DISCUSSION

The video started with a guy who had an issue with pornography. He felt guilty about it, and he sensed it was keeping him apart from God.

**He found it hard to conquer the addiction himself. Why is it important to get help from others when we're struggling with recurring issues?** (Others can hold us accountable, they check up on us. We know they will ask us about it)

**Do you think God can forgive us repeatedly for the same sin?** (Yes. Of course He wants us to grow and put these sins behind us. Of course He wants us to "repent" of our sin, and looks to Him. But He knows we are weak. He knows we will face the same temptations and He stands ready to forgive.)

We are not forgiven of any spiritual merit of our own, nor is forgiveness withheld because we sin repeatedly. We are forgiven because we are sinners who need forgiveness.

**Doug said that we have a "small view" of God's love. What did he mean by that?** (He was referring to a conditional view of God's love. God's love is "not based on what you do or don't do. He loves you because He created you and His love endures forever.)

# BIBLE

Conflict with God is pretty common among Biblical characters.

**Someone read Exodus 3:10-12.**

**What does God ask Moses to do?**

**How does Moses feel about that?**

**How does God respond to that?**

You would think that assurance would be quite convincing, but let's see how Moses reacts.

**Someone read Exodus 3:13-14.**

**What is Moses problem now?**

**What name does God give?**

We could park on this name of God for a long time, but basically He is saying that He is the God who "just is." Surely, this would enough for Moses- right?

**Someone read Exodus 4:1-5**

**What's Moses problem this time?**

**If you were God, how would you be feeling about Moses right now?**

**How does the Lord respond this time?**

Our question today involves conflict with God and what we can do about it. Sometimes WE break the relationship because of our sin. The problem is NOT that God refuses to forgive, but that we feel too guilty to ask for forgiveness. Sin has a way of numbing us, blinding us, dragging us away from God. The thing that won't happen is that God would get tired of forgiving us. Forgiveness is available if we ask.

**Rachel had a conflict with God because she resented what was going on in her life. Have you ever felt this way?, as if everyone around you has it figured out and you don't? How does it feel?** (If we were all able to be honest, everyone has felt this way at some point)

**What do you think would happen if we were more honest about our problems?**

**Do you agree? Why or why not?**

**If you could talk to Rachel, what would you say to her?**

**The disaster of Hurricane Katrina was a shock to Miles. How did he deal with it?**

**Do you think that's common? Do people turn their disappointment and anger into self-destructive behavior, like using drugs, etc? Why?**

In the next few verses God gives Moses 2 more ways to prove that God sent Him. More than enough, right?

**Someone read Exodus 4:10-14**

**What's bothering Moses at this point?**

**How does God answer that?**

**So Moses finally accepts the task, right?**

Wrong. He asks God to send someone else, and God suggests Moses' brother Aaron.)

**Let's look at a different angle. Read Exodus 32:9-10**

**What's going on in this story?** (Might need to read some context- verses before these perhaps?)

**What does the Lord want to do?**

**Someone read vs. 11-14.**

**What is Moses doing here?** (Arguing with God!)

**Did Moses succeed? Did his arguments work?**

**Does this surprise you?**

(God seems kind of human here, doesn't He?)

**What does this say about Moses' relationship with God?**

(To some it might seem amazingly honest and real. Moses feel free to disagree!)

**Bible Notes:**

# CRUNCH

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**Leader** Distribute the “Conflict management” handout. Consider having two volunteers act out the three diagrams or just discuss the solutions together.

Look up the verses listed and you use your own wisdom, then jot down ideas about what the “solution” is for each of those situations.

**1. We turn away with sin, selfishness, or guilt. God stands ready to forgive.**

Potential solution thoughts:

Ask for forgiveness. God is more than ready to forgive. He understands our weakness. In Christ, He has paid our penalty. Don't let pride or insecurity keep you away; ask Him to forgive you!

**2. God seems to be turning away from us, because of some question or doubt we have, or some event we dont understand.**

Potential solution thoughts:

This is a bit more complicated, but the solution seems to be to seek Him. Understand that you may never understand Him fully, and He may never grant every request. But He wants us to trust Him, even in our weakness. As come to more thorough knowledge of Him, the relationship can grow.

**3. Because we have questions and doubts, we think God is turning away, so we get mad and turn away- into sin and selfish behavior.**

Potential solution thoughts:

Break the ice. Come and reason with God. Restart the conversation. Hosea asks us to “return” to the Lord, and the Lord promises to “heal our waywardness.” Habakkuk may confuse some readers, but it draws a comparison between God and idols. We may turn to drugs, sex, anger, self-destruction, etc.— these become our idols. But Habakkuk wonders what kind of relationship we can have with them. We need to come back before the Lord. After launching all our complaints, we need to “keep silent” before Him. Listen, Learn. That will help repair the relationship that is broken.

**CRUNCH NOTES:**

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# SO WHAT

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**So What Notes:**

What do you think of the idea of arguing with God, haggling with Him as Paul did- as Moses did, as many other have?

Do you feel like your relationship with God is like that?  
Can you speak your mind?

What keeps you from having a relationship with God like that? (Cuz trust me, He can handle it...)

We also need to listen and keep our eyes open for all the ways God is making Himself known to us.

How are you listening and keeping your eyes open for God?