



Intelectual Honesty

Evidence that demands a verdict.

Week 3: April 14-20

20min

Introduce Guests/Share Life: *How has this week been going? Good? Bad? Ugly? Things to celebrate?*

Open in Prayer: *Include any prayer needs that came up while you were sharing life together.*

Recall the Guidelines: *Ask: "What is the purpose of the guidelines?" Answer: To be relational!*

2min

Share the Vision: *We are all broken people. We need relationship with God and with each other to walk in recovery from our brokenness. This group is a place to be honest and share this journey together.*

8min

Hook Question: What has been your most difficult encounter with death up to this point in your life?

5min

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

When Jesus died on the cross, His disciples were devastated. For them, this was an overwhelming encounter with death. They had hoped that Jesus was the Messiah – but now His body was in a tomb. He had died, and their hopes died with Him.

The disciples felt this way because they did not fully understand the Scriptures. They did not understand that the Messiah, the Savior of Israel and the Savior of the world, had to die in order to fulfill God's perfect plan. They needed someone to help them understand the purpose and significance of Jesus's death. They needed faith to believe what Jesus said: that He would rise again.

Today's story takes place on the same day that the women and the disciples discovered that Jesus had been resurrected and that His body was missing from the tomb. Before hearing the news, a couple of Jesus's disciples had left Jerusalem and were headed out on a road towards Emmaus. Jesus had said to gather in Galilee, but they thought He was dead, so they were going the wrong way. On that road they were met with a surprise encounter that would help them make sense of what had happened to Jesus. This is where our story begins...

15min

Tell the story from Luke 24:13-35: *Use different storytellers. Teach your group to share God's Word.*

Rebuild the story: *Group members retell the story based on what they remember.*

Read the story from Luke 24:13-35: *Ask the group to read these verses.*

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

Head
Questions:
Quicker
tempo.

- What do you like or dislike about this story?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- What part of this story can you relate to the most? Why?

Heart & Hand
Questions:
Slow down &
wait!

- What do you think God is trying to show you right now? How do you need to change?
- Who could retell the story for us right here one last time?

**Thank your storyteller for sharing the Word. Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week.
Close in prayer.**



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Week 3: The Group Guidelines

Group Guidelines: Resolve Conflict Biblically

What is Conflict?

One thing about group and real-life relationships is for certain – if you stay long enough you will experience conflict. We are all human. As humans, we make mistakes in our relationships. Those mistakes will eventually lead even the best of us into conflict.

Conflict is not evil in and of itself. Yes, conflict *can* be caused by sin, but not every conflict is born out of sin. Sometimes we experience conflict because we misunderstand. Sometimes we have conflict because we allowed our feelings to be hurt too easily. Sometimes we encounter conflict because we judge too quickly or have the wrong expectations. Still, even a conflict that begins in innocence can quickly turn into sin when we do not handle it God's way. If we are going to maintain healthy relationships with God and one another we must learn to resolve conflict biblically.

How to Resolve Conflict Biblically

Resolving conflict biblically begins the moment we feel the conflict stirring. We must learn to recognize the feelings of conflict in our own hearts. *Can you recognize the feelings of conflict?*

Feelings of Conflict: Feelings of frustration with someone else, feelings of betrayal, feeling neglected or ignored, feeling misunderstood, feeling judged or looked down upon, feeling like others are not doing their part, feeling unloved or unappreciated, feeling rejected or belittled, feeling like your confidence was broken, feeling lied to, feeling wounded by the words of another, feeling offended by what someone else said, etc.

These are the feelings of conflict. We **MUST** accept this reality: my **FEELINGS** are not an accurate representation of the **TRUTH**. If I am being led by my feelings I will *never* resolve conflict biblically. Yes, my feelings are valid. They are the way I feel. But that does not mean that my feelings are based in truth. Resolving conflict biblically allows a process to unfold where I can discover the truth in the midst of my feelings.

So, what is that process?

First, we should determine if the conflict we are feeling is something we can just let go. We cannot let sin go because the Bible tells us what to do when someone sins against us. However, at times, we can determine that the feelings we are experiencing need to be further evaluated before we take action. For example, if someone missing a meeting I schedule with them, instead of jumping straight to resolving a conflict about them not valuing my schedule, I can simply decide that I need to assume the best about their intentions and wait to see if the pattern repeats itself or not.

If the conflict is caused by sin, or if the same conflict is reoccurring and impacting our relationship, I must go to the person who caused me to experience the feelings of conflict. When I go, I must be careful to not jump to a judgement. Instead, I need to ask good questions to clarify the facts. More times than not, between people who love each other, the conflict can be resolved right here! Misunderstandings are a major reason for conflicts in the church. Giving someone a chance to clarify can bring quick and painless resolution.

If I discover that there was not a misunderstanding and that what I perceived to be true was true, the next step is to share with that person how their actions made me feel. I need to be honest and transparent; however, I need to avoid the temptation to mix in jabs and punches of my own. When I am in pain it is easy to speak painful things to others. I must resist that temptation and be willing to be honest and vulnerable in what I share. Again, more times than not, the conflict can be resolved right here! The other person will hear how they made us feel and will often apologize.

If the conflict cannot be resolved one-to-one, the next step is to include a witness. For small group members, this would be your group leader. For small group leaders, this would be your coach. Ask for the other person to come and listen as a mediator. Allow them the opportunity to help you resolve the conflict. Let them ask questions. Answer with a gentle spirit. Work hard to maintain the bond of peace.

If the conflict is still not resolved, the finally step is to involve our elders. The best way to get started down that road for our small group leaders is to contact our small group pastor (Brandon Werner).

The Goal

There is one final observation that must be made in conflict resolution. We must understand the goal. Look at what Jesus said in Matthew 18:15 when He was sharing the biblical model for conflict resolution...

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. **If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.**”

The goal is unity. The goal is love. The goal of conflict resolution is not to be right, or to be heard, or to be validated. The goal is to *gain your brother or sister*.

If you have the wrong goal, you will handle conflict the wrong way. If you want to honor God and honor our guidelines by resolving conflict biblically, you must have the right goal. Aim at real-life relationships. Aim at love. Aim at gaining your brother or your sister. Aim at living in unity and working together to grow as disciples and to reach others for Jesus. If you both have the right objective, and if you follow the biblical process, you can resolve your conflicts biblically.