



spiritual infant

DISCIPLE ME

THE ONE ABOUT CONFLICT

PART 1: Speaking Truth in Love

ICEBREAKER: "BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO"

We've all had to "break up" with something or someone - maybe a relationship, a job, a habit, or even a favorite TV show that just got too weird. Go around the group and share about a time you had to break up with something (or someone) - it could be serious or funny. Talk about what made it difficult and how you handled the conflict.

Examples: "I had to break up with my gym membership because I never went."

"I left a job I liked because of a difficult coworker."

"I ended a friendship that became toxic."

"I had to get away from my crazy ex because ..."

READ: CONFLICTED

If we're honest, *no one likes conflict*. Most of us would rather avoid it, brush it off, or hope it just disappears. But the truth is, conflict is a normal and regular part of life. Conflict shows up in our homes, our friendships, our workplaces, and yes, even in the church. Following Jesus doesn't mean we never face conflict; it means we handle it in a different way.

Over the next three conversations, we will explore what the Bible says about conflict and how to navigate it in a godly manner. Today, we'll start by looking at what it means to **speak the truth in love** - not avoiding hard conversations, but learning to approach them with honesty, humility, and a heart for restoration.

Read Matthew 18:15-17

In Matthew 18, Jesus gives His followers clear guidance on how to handle conflict with another believer - showing us the right way to approach and resolve issues within the family of faith.

- What stood out to you when you heard what Jesus said about handling conflict?
- How is His way different from how people usually deal with conflict?
- Why do you think Jesus cared so much about giving us a plan for this? What does it tell you about what He wants for His followers?

In the next two conversations, we'll take a closer look at verses 16 and 17. But for today, we're focusing on verse 15, where Jesus says: *"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over."*

- What do you think it means to "go and point out their fault, just between the two of you"?
- Why do you think Jesus tells us to handle conflict privately first, instead of involving others right away?
- How might this approach protect both people - the one hurt and the one who caused the hurt?
- What do you think it means to "win them over"? Why is that the goal instead of "proving you're right"?

STUDY: EPHESIANS 4

Jesus tells us what to *do* when conflict happens — go directly, privately, and with the goal of making things right. Paul helps us understand the *attitude* we need to have when we do it. In Ephesians 4:1–6, he reminds us that unity in the church starts with humility, gentleness, patience, and love. Let's read these verses together and see how they shape the way we handle conflict.

Read Ephesians 4:1-6

- Which of the qualities Paul lists - humility, gentleness, patience, or love - do you find hardest to show when there's conflict?
- How could living out these qualities change the way you approach disagreements or tension with others?

Paul starts by describing the attitude that holds the church together - humility, gentleness, patience, and love. A few verses later, he explains that this attitude leads to spiritual maturity. When we live this way, we grow stronger in our faith, become more like Christ, and are more mature in the way we navigate the world.

Read Ephesians 4:14-16

- What stands out to you about what a "mature" faith looks like in these verses?

CHALLENGE:

This week, think about one relationship where tension or misunderstanding exists. This week, take the first step Jesus describes — go directly to the person. Don't go to vent. Go to heal. Before you talk, pray for the courage to be truthful and the humility to be loving. Afterward, share with your discipleship group what you learned.