

# PREVENTING, MANAGING, AND RESOLVING CONFLICT

## TIPS FOR PREVENTING CONFLICT

**Address issues quickly.** If you have an issue with someone, go quickly and talk to them rather than allowing the issue to grow.

**Use “I” statements** when talking about what you are feeling and experiencing. Say, “I get angry when...” Rather than saying, “You make me mad.”

**Listen closely for underlying messages.** Remember tone and body language communicates as much if not more than the words.

**Try to communicate in person.** Try to avoid the use of e-mail or phones when conflicts occur.

## TIPS FOR MANAGING CONFLICT

Conflict is the natural result of people spending time together. In Life Groups conflict should be embraced rather than avoided. Conflict may occur between group members. Group members will definitely experience conflict with people outside the group. When properly handled, conflict can spur groups to a deeper level of intimacy and community. Use the following questions to gain perspective when working through conflict in your Life Group:

Who is involved?  What is the issue or concern?  What are the needs of the individuals involved?  What are the needs of the whole group?  How can this be an opportunity for

growth in the following areas?

- Relationship with God ☐
- Relationship with One Another
- Relationship with Self ☐
- Relationship with the World

What Scripture(s) are relevant to this situation? How can I pray for this situation?

## **TIPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT**

While dealing with conflict is difficult to do at times, When handled properly, conflict can build intimacy within your group. Matthew 18 serves as our guide for conflict resolution within groups.

### **Step One: One-on-One Meeting to Seek Reconciliation (Matt 18:15)**

If you have conflict with someone, go to him or her one-on-one to seek reconciliation. If someone in your group comes to you to talk about a conflict they have with someone else in the group, your first question should be “Have you talked to them about it?” If they say no, don’t even listen to the issue before they go and attempt to make it right. If they have talked to them then you can move to step two.

### **Step Two: Mediator is Included (Matt 18:16)**

Someone should be included if the problem is not resolved in a one-on-one meeting (or several one-on-one meetings). You, the leader, should serve as mediator for unresolved conflict for your group members. If you, the leader, are involved in the conflict, then the mediator should be a qualified staff member or a Life Group Team Leader.

### **Step Three: Offense is Made Public (Matt 18:17)**

In the rare case that the problem cannot be resolved with outside mediation, the offense should be brought out into public. This can be a discussion among the group as a whole. This should be considered as a last resort to restore the relationship, and this step should not be taken without gaining consent from a pastor.