

Have you ever had a situation where you were able to work through a conflict with another person in a healthy way? Describe what that was like.

How can we work through conflict with others in a manner that says “I am FOR you”?

Is there any area of unresolved conflict in your life right now? If so, what action should you take to resolve it?



***“When Community  
Breaks Down: Resolving  
Conflict”***

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006

***The Bible gives us two big ideas about conflict...***

- Expect it!  
“To be alive is to be in conflict.” – John Ortberg
- Work through it!

***How do we do this?***

- Start at the right place.

*“Therefore, having laid aside falsehood, each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor [cf. Zech. 8:16], for we are members of one another. Be angry and do not sin [cf. Ps. 4:5]; do not let the sun go down on the cause of your anger. Do not give the devil an opportunity.”*

*(Eph. 4:25-27; NET Bible, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org))*

- Take action.
  - Examine my attitudes.  
*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged.” (Matt. 7:1)*
  - Take responsibility.  
*“You hypocrite, first take the place out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” (Matt. 7:5)*
  - Take initiative.
- Talk to the person—not about them.

*“...leave your gift there in front of the altar. First, go and be reconciled to your brother...” (Matt. 5:23)*

*“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you...” (Matt. 18:15)*

- Aim at reconciliation.

*“...If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.” (Matt. 18:15)*

Keep in mind: “I am to be FOR this person!”

How do I communicate this?

- Start by affirming the relationship.
- Put the conflict in perspective.
- Talk about what happened.
- Express your feelings about what happened.
- Take ownership for your part of the conflict.
- Be clear about what you want from this person.
- Practice verbal discipline.

– John Ortberg

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How did your family handle conflict growing up?

How would you describe your style in handling conflict today?

The Bible shows us that we should expect conflict, but we should also learn how to work through it. What happens when we don't work through conflict in a healthy way?

Read Ephesians 4:25-27. In this passage Paul talks about handling anger in an appropriate way. What does this look like? Why does he warn us that if we don't handle anger effectively, we are giving the devil an opportunity?

In his discussions of conflict, Jesus consistently talks about taking the initiative to go to the other person. Is this difficult for you? If so, why? If we don't take this initiative, what happens to the conflict?

Do you have questions/comments about what you have heard? You can contact George at 237-6094 or [george@salemefc.org](mailto:george@salemefc.org)

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