

Little Times of Trouble



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, flip charts/paper, markers/pens

Surveying the Source

Eph. 6:10–18; Phil. 2:4–8

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Recognize that anger (and emotions) are not inherently sinful but can be in certain contexts
- ▶ Understand that conflict in the home is part of life and God expects us to manage conflict

- ▶ Discover Christ's method for managing conflict as shown throughout Scripture

Preparing to Lead

Family is the nucleus of civilization—the first and most basic form of community and government. Essentially, what we see in society is a reflection of what is taking place in our homes. Even in the best of homes, times of struggle and con-

flict are bound to occur. How the struggles and conflicts are handled determines the prosperity or destruction of a home. In Scripture, God has much to say about how to deal with conflict in the delicate and beautiful institution of family.

Getting Started

A. *Say:* “Fire is a blessing to the world. Before electricity and apart from the sun, it was humanity’s main source of light. Its heat brings necessary warmth during the merciless winters. With it, we made our food and molded our tools. And there’s something so captivating about its vigorous flames. But then again, fire can be dangerous. Many deaths and destruction of nature have been caused by fire. The key between the beneficial and harmful elements of fire is: control.”

Discuss how we can apply this concept of fire and controlling it to human emotions and anger.

B. A pet peeve can be defined as “something that is maybe a bit annoying to most people but is very annoying or upsetting to a particular person. Discuss some pet peeves of your own or ask others to offer their own. For many of us, our families are a popular source of our pet peeves and when these arise, high emotions and conflicts can often follow. With a partner or if in a small group, discuss a pet peeve experienced in your family, how it may lead to conflict, and how you handle it (be careful not to call out the name or role in your family; e.g. use “family member” vs “mom/dad/brother”).

Delving Into the Word

A. Divide the class into groups of three and ask each group to read 2 Samuel 13, looking at the family conflict that erupts after the grievous crime Amnon committed against his half-sister. Ask them to identify the conflicts that arose in David's family and discuss how each character reacted (2 Sam. 13:21). Discuss how this difficult conflict could have been well managed using the conflict management principles found in Prov. 19:11; Matt. 7:1, 2; 18:15–17; Eph. 4:26.

Ask: "Was it right for David to be angry?" Consider Ezek. 7:8 to compare.

B. Assign each group to take a look into God's approach to managing conflict between Him and His creation. Note how God initiates reconciliation even though we are in the wrong. Start by reading the account in Genesis 3, comparing Adam and Eve's sin and their treatment of each other when confronted about it. Then look at how God treats them in spite of their sin. Consider these texts in your consideration of how God goes about handling conflict: Ps. 103:8; Isa 1:18; Matt 5:9; John 3:17; Rom. 5:8.

Discussing the Ideas

1. What happens when a family member does not want to deal with conflict maturely or in a Christ-like manner?
2. What influence does conflict in homes, on children, extended family, and society?
3. How can you be sincere and genuine yet calm and collected while navigating conflict?
4. Why are communication skills im-

portant for dealing with conflict as soon as it begins?

5. How can you behave when in conflict with older people (parents, leaders, siblings)?

6. What practical steps can you put in place to not let the sun go down on your anger (i.e. you deal with it swiftly)?

7. How did God design emotions in the first place? What is their value?

Closing the Activity

When Jesus shared the story of the wise man who built his house upon the rock and the foolish man who built his house upon the sand, He mentioned that both experienced the strong rains, flood, and winds that threatened the stability of their homes. This parable shows that no one is immune to the storms of life, including

conflict in the home. But a foundation in Christ and His Word helps us to endure these storms and get through them, instead of them destroying our homes. Discuss how to build this foundation on a daily basis and practical ways to prepare for times of conflict in the home.

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