

That Thing Called Love #6
Conflicts

Word

Scripture Reference

Song of Solomon 5:2–6:3

Discussion Questions

1. What usually causes conflict in a relationship? Discuss.
2. Read Song of Solomon 5:2–6:3. Past the beautiful, passionate evening of their wedding night, Solomon and his wife are now years into the reality of their married life. In this passage we see Solomon coming back after a long day and desiring the intimate affections of his wife. However, perhaps because it was very late, she disregards him and refused to open the door. Solomon respected her feelings but walked away disappointed. By the time she realized what she had just done, he had already left. Discuss how indifference can actually cause conflict in relationships. How does indifference show and develop in your personal friendship or husband-wife relationships? Share how you deal with it.
3. Seeds of conflict sprout when there are unresolved expectations, when you expect one thing and you get something different. The Word of God provides three ground rules for biblical conflict. Ground Rule #1 is this: *In dealing with conflict, there should be a continual pursuit of love* (v. 6-8). What did the wife do right after she felt sorry and opened the door for Solomon but realized that he had left? Are you a person who takes initiative to resolve conflicts when they arise? If so, share the reason behind your action. Discuss how you could still love while dealing with a conflict.
4. Oftentimes, we want the other person to change in order to resolve a conflict, but as Christians we are called to pursue love, not to pursue change. Why do you think this is so? Who does the Bible tell us can

change a person? Share a testimony where prayer and the Word of God have helped in changing you or a loved one you've prayed for.

5. Secondly, in dealing with conflict, Ground Rule #2 is that you should *seek and see the goodness of others* (v. 9-16). When you think of the good things about the other person, the conflict starts to wear off. Describe what Solomon's wife realized when she started focusing on his strengths. During a conflict, what usually comes into your mind about the other person? Discuss how you can focus on the strengths of the person you're in conflict with and see his/her worth, instead of focusing on his/her weaknesses and fueling your anger.
6. Thirdly, in dealing with conflict, Ground Rule #3 is that you *don't do anything to jeopardize your relationship* (6:1-3). Where did Solomon go to deal with his disappointment? Describe how people put their relationships at risk and end up hurting each other instead of resolving the conflict. Discuss how conflicts and pressures that may creep into any relationship should be dealt with. What are the things you should avoid doing when problems in your relationship arise?

Walk

God was rightfully angry because of sin, but He pursued love and exemplified this when He sent Jesus Christ—who, as He was about to die, cried out to His Father to forgive those who abused and crucified Him—to die in our place so that we can be called His friends, His children. How do you exemplify love to your friends and loved ones? How do you resolve conflicts in order keep a good relationship with one another? Pray and apply the three biblical ground rules in resolving your conflicts.

Worship & Prayer

Father, because You are a holy God, a relationship between You and a sinner like me is not possible. But because You are also a loving God, because You are love, You reached out to me by sending Your Son Jesus Christ to die in my place. Because He did, I am forgiven. Because He rose again, I am free. Thank You, Father, for Your gift of love. Help me now to pursue the same love You showed me, so that even if there are conflicts in my relationships, love will still abound. Open my eyes that I may seek and see the goodness in others, just as Christ did to me. Protect me, Lord, from anything that may jeopardize my relationship with You and with other people. I place it all in Your hands, O God. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.