

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Omaha, Nebraska



A SIX-LESSON STUDY GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING & RESPONDING TO CONFLICT

A six-lesson journey through Scripture to help you face conflict
honestly, respond with grace, and grow toward the healing
God offers.

"I AM BECAUSE WE ARE"

Pastor Dwayne Hawkins · Antioch Baptist Church, Omaha

From the Pastor

FORWARD

This study was developed from a sermon series originally preached at Antioch Baptist Church. Conflict is part of life—and of faith. As followers of Christ, we’re not called to avoid it but to grow through it.

These lessons were written to help our church family seek peace, understanding, and maturity together. My hope is that it helps you face conflict honestly, respond with grace, and experience the healing that comes when God renews hearts and relationships.

— PASTOR DWAYNE HAWKINS

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

FOR PERSONAL STUDY	FOR SMALL GROUP	FOR PASTORAL CARE
Work through each lesson at your own pace. Take time with the reflection questions. The goal is personal transformation.	Use the discussion questions to facilitate dialogue. Create a safe, confidential space for honesty.	When walking with someone through a specific conflict, reference the relevant lesson as a teaching tool.

A 6-Lesson Study Guide

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Each lesson includes a Scripture focus, reflection questions, a discussion prompt, and a closing prayer.

Start here

BEFORE YOU BEGIN



If you are holding this guide, you are likely in the middle of a conflict. That takes courage. You are not alone, and God has not abandoned you.

Work at your own pace. Be honest. Bring your real conflict to these pages.

You have been given escape. You have been given wisdom. You have been given grace. Trust Him.

This guide also lives within Ubuntu Care & Growth — Antioch’s framework for the Grow phase of discipleship. Conflict resolution falls under **Pastoral Care**; if this conflict runs deeper than these pages can hold, your deacon or Pastor Hawkins can walk with you directly.

MY CONFLICT

Write briefly to clarify what you are processing.

The conflict:

Who is involved:

How long this has been going on:

What I hope will change:

My role in this:

LESSON ONE

James 4:1-2, 7-8 (ESV)

THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF CONFLICT



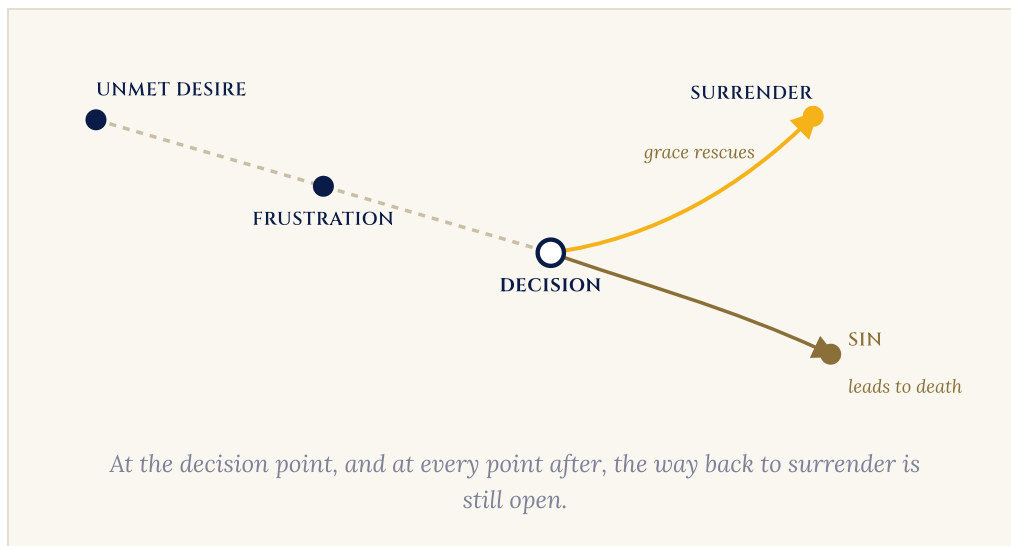
As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

Conflict rarely starts suddenly. It usually begins with an unmet expectation, grows into frustration, and can escalate out of control.

CORE CONTENT

Conflict among us happens because conflict is within us. Our desires compete for attention. When unmet, they create frustration. James 4:1-10 shows the pattern: desires → decision → sin or surrender. At any point, we can stop and ask God for help. His grace rescues us.



YOUR REFLECTION

1. Where are you on the slope? (Top / Middle / Near bottom)

2. What unmet desire or expectation triggered this conflict?

3. Which decision are you making right now? Confess and surrender, or continue down the slope?

FOR DISCUSSION

— Share your conflict: how did it start, and at what point did things escalate?

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, help me see my conflict clearly. Show me where I am and what decision I am facing. Give me courage to ask for help. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

Every conflict starts small — and grace can meet you at any point on the slope.

LESSON TWO

1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

THE GIFTS IN CONFLICT



As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

When conflict rises, you might feel powerless. But God has given you three specific gifts: escape (the power to choose differently), wisdom (clarity about what to do), and grace (the strength to do it).

CORE CONTENT

ESCAPE

We are not victims of our emotions. (1 Cor 10:13)

WISDOM

Helps us see clearly and know the right response. (James 1:5)

GRACE

The power to do what we know is right, even when hard. (James 4:6)

These three gifts are always available.

YOUR REFLECTION

1. Where have you felt tempted to react badly in your conflict?

2. Which gift (escape, wisdom, or grace) do you most need right now?

3. How would it change things to rely on God's gifts instead of your own strength?

FOR DISCUSSION

— Have you experienced any of these gifts in your conflict? Share what that looked like.

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, help me recognize the gifts You have given me. Give me wisdom to see clearly. Pour out Your grace so I can respond the way You want. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

God's gifts are for right now — you don't face this conflict with your own strength alone.

LESSON THREE

James 5:16 (ESV)

THE TOOLS FOR CONFLICT



As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

Sometimes we still hurt people despite the gifts God provides. When that happens, God has given us two powerful tools: confession (admitting what we did) and forgiveness (releasing someone from the debt they owe us).

CORE CONTENT

CONFESSION

Agreement with God about what we did.

1. Admit your actions
2. Acknowledge it as sin
3. Assume responsibility
4. Ask for forgiveness
5. Seek to alter your behavior

FORGIVENESS

Releasing someone from the debt they owe you.

1. Recognize the offense
2. Reaffirm your love
3. Remember your forgiveness
4. Release their debt
5. Be ready to pronounce it

YOUR REFLECTION

1. Is there something you need to confess? Using the five steps, write it out.

2. Who have you struggled to forgive? What would releasing that debt look like?

FOR DISCUSSION

– What is the hardest part about confession or forgiveness in your situation?

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, give me courage to confess. Help me forgive those who have hurt me. Open my heart to the healing You offer. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

Confession and forgiveness aren't weakness – they are the tools that make healing possible.

LESSON FOUR

Psalm 51:3-4; 1 John 1:9 (ESV)

RECONCILING WITH GOD



As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

When we sin against another person, we have also sinned against God. Before we can reconcile with them, we need to reconcile with God first. This happens through three movements: acknowledge, confess, and accept.

CORE CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Recognizing that our sin offends God.

AGREEMENT

Confessing to God that what we did was wrong.

ACCEPTANCE

Receiving His forgiveness and letting go of guilt and shame.

God is faithful. He will forgive us, cleanse us, and remove both guilt and shame.

YOUR REFLECTION

1. What is your part in this conflict? Acknowledge it before God.

2. How will you accept His forgiveness and cleansing to deal with guilt?

3. How will you accept His truth and love to deal with shame?

FOR DISCUSSION

— Why do you think it's important to reconcile with God before trying to reconcile with the other person?

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, I acknowledge my sin. Forgive me. Cleanse me. Release me from guilt and shame. Help me believe I am loved. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

Reconciliation with God always comes first — everything else follows from it.

LESSON FIVE

Matthew 5:23-24 (ESV)

RECONCILING WITH OTHERS



As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

After reconciling with God, you are ready to reconcile with the other person. This requires taking initiative, examining yourself first, sharing your hurts honestly, and coming with a forgiving heart.

CORE CONTENT

- **Take the initiative** — do not wait for them.
- **Start with self** — confess your part first.
- **Share your hurts** — express honestly and respectfully.
- **Be ready to forgive** — come with a forgiving heart.

God will always forgive us. We can have peace knowing we have done our part.

YOUR REFLECTION

1. What would taking the initiative toward reconciliation look like in your situation?

2. What do you need to confess to the other person?

3. How will you share your hurts honestly and respectfully?

FOR DISCUSSION

— Talk about taking initiative: what makes this step so difficult? What would help?

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, give me courage to take the first step. Help me see the other person as You see them. Give me words of honesty and respect. Open my heart to forgive. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

Reconciliation with others begins the moment you take the first step.

LESSON SIX

Philippians 2:1-8 (ESV)

RESOLVING OUR ISSUES



As you work through this lesson, bring to mind a specific conflict — current or recent.

WHAT THIS LESSON IS ABOUT

Reconciling the relationship is not the same as resolving the issue. Even after confession and forgiveness, the material matter that caused the conflict still has to be worked out. Most of that work happens before we ever come together — in the posture of our own hearts.

Coming “to the table” here means the actual conversation where the issue gets negotiated and resolved — not a courtroom, a transaction, but a table you both sit down to in good faith.

BEFORE YOU COME TO THE TABLE

MOTIVATION

Draw on the encouragement, comfort, and love already ours in Christ.

EXHORTATION

Pursue the same mind, the same love, being in full accord.

MORTIFICATION

Let selfish ambition and the need to win die — confess it and let it go.

ELEVATION

Raise your humility, and how much you value the other person.

WHEN YOU COME TO THE TABLE

CONSIDERATION

Set aside your position on the issue.

MUTUAL INTERESTS

Find what you both actually want, underneath the disagreement.

NEGOTIATION

With the mind of Christ — He set aside His rights, humbled Himself, and served.

YOUR REFLECTION

1. What is the core issue that still needs to be resolved?

2. What needs to die in you before you come to the table — selfish ambition, the need to win, something else?

3. Setting your position aside, what mutual interest do you and the other person actually share?

FOR DISCUSSION

— What would it look like to focus on mutual interests rather than your position?

PRAYER FOCUS

“God, prepare my heart for resolution. Kill the pride and selfishness in me. Help us find solutions that honor You and both of us. Amen.”

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

True resolution asks less “who is right” and more “what honors God and both of us.”

Conclusion

MOVING FORWARD



You have journeyed through six lessons on understanding and responding to conflict. Lessons One through Three gave you the foundation. Lessons Four through Six showed you how to apply it.

Here is what matters most: conflict is inevitable, but it can be minimized. With understanding and God's grace, it can become an opportunity for growth, deeper relationships, and spiritual maturity.

You do not have to figure this out alone. God provides escape, wisdom, and grace. Lean into His resources. Trust the process. Trust Him.

OUR PRAYER FOR YOU

"May the peace of God be with you."

With you on the journey,

PASTOR DWAYNE HAWKINS

Rev. Dwayne Hawkins, Pastor



ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

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APPENDIX

For small group and pastoral leaders

FACILITATOR NOTES



This section is for whoever leads a group or a one-on-one conversation through this study. Conflict is tender ground — your role is not to fix, but to hold space so people can be honest before God and one another.

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

- **Confidentiality first** — agree as a group that what is shared stays in the room.
- **No fixing** — let people process out loud without rushing to solve their conflict for them.
- **Model vulnerability** — a facilitator willing to share their own story gives others permission to do the same.
- **Protect the quiet ones** — invite, never pressure, someone who hasn't spoken.

SUGGESTED SESSION FLOW

Each lesson runs comfortably in about 30 minutes.

OPEN · 5 MIN	Prayer, and a moment to arrive — ask how everyone is doing, honestly.
TEACH · 5 MIN	Walk through “What This Lesson Is About” and “Core Content” together.
REFLECT & DISCUSS · 15 MIN	Quiet time for “Your Reflection,” then use “For Discussion” to open the floor.
CLOSE · 5 MIN	Pray the “Prayer Focus” together, aloud, as one voice.

IF SOMEONE NEEDS MORE THAN A GROUP CAN OFFER

Some conflicts are beyond what a lesson or a group conversation can hold. If someone's situation involves abuse, ongoing harm, or a crisis, don't try to resolve it in the group — connect them with their deacon or Pastor Hawkins for pastoral care, and with outside resources through Community Care if needed.

A NOTE TO FACILITATORS

You do not have to have your own conflicts resolved to lead this study well. You only have to be honest, patient, and willing to sit in the room while God does His work.

"I AM BECAUSE WE ARE"

A facilitator's job is to hold space, not carry the outcome — God does the healing.