



## **PART FIVE INTRODUCTION**

Part 5 of the series is about conflict. Conflict is bound to happen in a family where God has put together many different personalities. At the heart of conflict is sin, and at the heart of sin is our selfishness. The key then, is how we carry out conflict resolution.

The Matthew 18 principle: Seven principles to conflict resolution,

- One As soon as you can, decide to reconcile
- Two Take the initiative to approach the other person
- Three Own your part
- Four Check your motives
- Five Speak the truth
- Six Speak the truth in private
- Seven Forgive one another

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What do you love to do most with your family? What makes you come together as a family?
2. How do you resolve conflicts in your family?
  - i. Are you a turtle? i.e. avoiding conflict  
Are you a skunk? i.e. goes on the attack  
Are you a porcupine? i.e. with a soft underbelly
  - ii. Do you “divide and conquer”?  
Do you “rationa-lies” your different behaviour to avoid conceding or compromising?
3. What does your family do to honour the differences and unique personalities of each person in your family?
  - i. Have you learnt to negotiate with your family members when there is a difference in preference?
  - ii. Do you come together as a family to support and encourage the different talents of each person?

4. Read Matthew 18:15-19.
  - i. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.
  - ii. Read the passage aloud
  - iii. Ask some context questions of the passage:
    - What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
    - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
    - What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?
  - iv. Some observation questions of the passage:
    - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
    - What is the main point or points?
    - What surprises are there?
    - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated
  - v. Some meaning questions of the text:
    - How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
    - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
    - What does this teach us about God?
    - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
  - vi. Some application questions of the passage:
    - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
    - Is there some attitude I need to change?
    - How does this passage call on me to change the way I live?

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

If you are hurt, have a grievance, or know that there is an issue between you and your family – or any other person in your life – can we try to practice the seven steps to reconciliation?

## CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

### ***Are you willing to “remove the plank”?***

*Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. ~ Matthew 7:3-5 (NIV)*

### ***Are you able to recognize that conflict comes from within?***

*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. ~ Matthew 4:1-3 (NIV)*