



# Book of Love

## THE BOOK OF LOVE, PART 4: THE ART OF CONFLICT

Most couples believe conflict is the problem—when in reality, avoiding conflict is far more dangerous. Every relationship fights. The real question isn't if you will fight, but how. Unresolved conflict, unmet expectations, and self-centered reactions slowly erode intimacy and trust. Left unchecked, small issues become deep wounds.

Conflict is not a sign of a bad marriage—but mishandled conflict can destroy a good one. Learning to fight God's way can actually deepen love, build trust, and restore intimacy rather than damage it.

**BIG IDEA: We all fight, but how we fight determines the strength of our marriage.**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Growing up, how did your family typically handle conflict—avoid it, explode, or talk it through? How do you think that shaped the way you deal with conflict today?
2. How do you react to your spouse? For some it may be the silent treatment. For others, it's like tripping a land mine. What are some unhealthy ways you have reacted to your spouse in the past?
3. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Song 5:2-3](#).*

*<sup>2</sup> I slept, but my heart was awake, when I heard my lover knocking and calling: "Open to me, my treasure, my darling, my dove, my perfect one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night." <sup>3</sup> But I responded, "I have taken off my robe. Should I get dressed again? I have washed my feet. Should I get them soiled?"* [Song 5:2-3 \(NLT\)](#)

4. What unmet expectations do you see in this moment between Solomon and his wife? Why are unmet expectations such a common source of conflict in relationships?
5. The first root cause of conflict in marriage is **Unmet Expectations**. Conflict often starts when expectations go unspoken or unmet. What are some expectations people commonly bring into marriage without realizing it? Why is it dangerous to assume your spouse "just knows"?
6. The second root cause of conflict in marriage is **Self-Centeredness**. Both Solomon and his wife are focused on their own needs in this scene. Why does self-centeredness escalate conflict so quickly? How have you seen selfishness quietly damage relationships?
7. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Ephesians 5:21](#).*

*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.* [Ephesians 5:21 \(NLT\)](#)

8. What does mutual submission look like in real-life conflict? Why is mutual submission harder than winning an argument?
9. Why does "winning" an argument usually mean losing something relationally? What changes when both people aim for resolution instead of victory?
10. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Song 5:4-5](#).*

*<sup>4</sup> My lover tried to unlatch the door, and my heart thrilled within me. <sup>5</sup> I jumped up to open the door for my love, and my hands dripped with perfume. My fingers dripped with lovely myrrh as I pulled back the bolt.* [Song 5:4-5 \(NLT\)](#)

11. How does Solomon respond instead of reacting when his needs aren't met? What does this teach us about responding to God instead of reacting to our spouse?
12. Why is reacting so natural—and responding so difficult—in moments of conflict? What practical steps help you pause and respond in a healthier way?
13. *With your Bible or Bible App, [read Ephesians 4:26-27](#).*

<sup>26</sup> And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup>  
for anger gives a foothold to the devil. [Ephesians 4:26-27 \(NLT\)](#)

14. Why is “walking away” from conflict often more damaging than staying engaged? How does unresolved anger give room for conflict to grow, making small things become bigger?
15. Has nagging and complaining ever helped transform a person? Why do we resort to nagging our spouses? What’s the best way to seek transformation in our spouse?
16. Conflict is a way to prove your love and deepen your marriage. How could handling conflict well actually strengthen your relationship?

## MOVING FORWARD

Conflict is inevitable, but damage is not. Healthy couples choose humility over pride, submission over selfishness, and conversation over avoidance. This week, commit to fighting clean—putting the other person’s needs first, responding instead of reacting, talking instead of walking away, and refusing to let small things grow into big wounds.

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

*Ephesians 5:21 (NLT)*

### The 17 “Nevers” of Communicating with Your Spouse

1. Never raise your voice in your home.
2. Never publicly embarrass your mate.
3. Never argue in front of the children.
4. Never use the kids to win an argument.
5. Never talk about your spouse to others outside of your marriage.
6. Never use sex to win.
7. Never touch in anger.
8. Never call names.
9. Never get historical and call into account a wrong suffered.
10. Never stomp out.
11. Never freeze out your mate.
12. Never use the in-laws.
13. Never reason in the face of pain.
14. Never let the sun go down on your anger and give the devil an opportunity.
15. Never reverse an argument.
16. Never fail to listen to your mate.
17. Never harden yourself toward your spouse.