

Conflicts

A

Strife-Free

Life



Purpose of Booklets

These are **Short Starter** Studies on **Sensitive** Subjects that **Stir & Stimulate** you toward **Biblical, Practical** Information that show that **Jesus** has **Great Answers** to some of life's **Hardest Questions**.

At www.FamilyBibleStudies.TIPS & the Family Bible Study App each booklet is a free download along with a short podcast explaining each booklet.

The website and App also has:

*“Ten Terrific Tips to make
Family Bible Studies
Everyone’s FAVORITE time of the week!”*

The website and App also give lists of different **Categories** for the booklets as well as ways to use the booklets in:

1. Bringing **Friends** to **Christ**
2. As a Resource for **Pastor’s Sermons**
3. **Small Group** Bible studies in a **Church**
4. As a **Resource** for Christian **Counselors**
5. Bible studies with **Friends** or **Co-workers**
6. For your own **Personal Growth & Bible Study**
7. Christian **Business Owners** to serve their **Customers** or **Employees**

What if I Don’t Agree with What I Read?

There is always a good chance that I am wrong or that I have poorly communicated. I always encourage each person to research on your own. It may be that your research helps me and others to find God’s heart more clearly.

We all seek His truth by the two Bible measures of:

1. what is **clear** and **consistent** in **God’s Word** and
2. what bears the **Fruit** of **Jesus** in the lives of those who follow that application.

In heaven, all of God’s purposes in God’s Word will be clear and our actions will be aligned with God’s Word. I constantly ask myself, what will we **act** like and **believe** when we are in **heaven**. This is my goal in these booklets.

*“Thy kingdom come; thy **will** be **done** on **earth** as it is in **heaven**”*

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The **Belt** of **Truth**

Part of this first chapter comes from my book on the Armor of God.

Conflict is Satan's greatest weapon.

The purpose of the armor of God is to protect us from the attacks of Satan.

The **Ugliest**, **Deepest**, and most **Painful** wounds ever inflicted in our lives have come through **Conflicts**. Through our spouses, parents, children, co-workers or friends, Satan has pierced our soul. We play back the strife-filled memories like endless loops of a grisly horror film. We relive the anger, accusations, high-volume, and excessive agony.

Our society is becoming more dysfunctional. Families are fractured. Homes are no longer safe. In this war zone, living with the infected, festering wounds of contention has become the expected way of life.

I see the daily devastation of dissension. Like most pastors, I've found that conflict resolution accounts for 90% of my counseling.

Gird your Loins

The Bible defines dealing with a conflict as Girding your Loins.

*Job 38:3 **Gird up** now thy **loins** like a man; for I will demand of thee and answer thou me.*

In chapter 40, Job wanted to DROP the discussion and God said No!

*Job 40:7 **Gird up** thy **loins** now like a man: I will demand of thee and declare thou unto me.*

29 times in the Bible you will find this phrase "Gird your Loins". In every case it involves taking the long flowing robe and wrapping it tightly around your waist.

In a physical conflict, you could trip or get tangled in this lengthy robe. Tying this robe around your waist is a picture of "**Removing Distractions**". Tying your robe this way turns it into a Belt. That was Paul's picture of the Belt of Truth in the Armor of God in Eph. 6

*Eph. 6:14 Stand therefore, having your **Loins Gird** about with **Truth***

You are RIGHT..... But you Don't have TRUTH!

The reason you are so **Passionate** is because you are RIGHT!

The reason you are so **Upset** is because you are RIGHT!

- You have a **Small Belt Loop** of the TRUTH.
- You do **NOT** have **ALL** the truth.

20 years from now, you will look back and realize that you **Didn't** even have **15%** of the Truth.

Even more, you will realize that the **OTHER** person **also** had **10-15%** of the Truth. They also have a belt loop. **They** are **ALSO** very **RIGHT!**

This changes everything!

Instead of being so **CERTAIN** in your perspective, you have to **decide** if you **want GOD'S** perspective.

The **ONLY** way to find **God's** perspective is to **FIND VALUE** in the **Other Person's** Perspective.

*John 8:32 Then you will know the **Truth**,
and the **Truth** will set you free.*

*James 3:17 and the **Wisdom** from **Above**, first, indeed, is
pure, then peaceable, gentle, **Easily Entreated**, full of
kindness and good fruits, **Uncontentious**, and unhypocritical*

*II Tim. 2:23 And the Lord's Servant **MUST**
NOT Quarrel. Instead, he must be **Kind** to
Everyone, able to Teach, Not Resentful*

*Prov. 20:3 It is to one's **Honor** to **Avoid strife**,
but every **Fool** is **Quick to Quarrel**.*

How **BLIND** am I? Four Revealing Questions!

Once you sincerely ask Jesus to help you embrace these four questions all Self-Righteous Anger is GONE!

1. How will I **WISH** that I **handled** this situation **20** years from **now**?

This is my first question I ask myself and it always changes my responses.



2. Will I be the **Other** Person's **DEFENSE** Attorney?

Admit it! You are assuming the worst about your opponent.

If you were **Their** Defense Attorney, you would:

- **Minimize** their **Negative** Traits and
- **Magnify** the **Positive Points** in their **Perspective**.

Is this hard? It sure is!

This question is **TESTING** how much you want God's will compared to a Selfish desire to **CRUSH** your opponent.

If you first find a **Neutral, Wise** person and **Practice** these **Positive Points** about your opponent, you will be **SHOCKED** that everyone else ALREADY SAW all of these points about your opponent and You are the **BLIND** one.

3. Will I be the **Other** Person's **PROSECUTING** Attorney?

- What points about **Me** are **Irritating**?
- Where am I **Weakest** in **My** perspective?

Every person has **Irritating** points. Are you honest about your irritating points?

This other person does **NOT** have your **Personality Gifts** and **Passions**. They usually have completely different personality gifts and passions. **Their** personality gifts and passions are **JUST AS Valuable** and **Important** to **Jesus** as are yours.

In addition, **Their** Prosecuting Attorney will

- **Minimize** your **Positive** Traits and
- **Magnify** your **Negative Points**.

ALL of this will be TRUTH!

4. What is the **Fruit** of my **Loins**?

Biblically, our **Loins** represent **Future Generations!**

- How will my handling of this situation affect future generations?
- When I **Look Back** in **20** Years – what **Truths** about Becoming **More Like Jesus** was Jesus trying to teach me in this conflict?

Conflicts are Satan's favorite way to destroy **Homes**, ruin **Careers**, crash **Ministries** and increase **Generational Curses**.

If, **TODAY**, I can **FIND** the things about **Jesus' character** that are being formed in me through this conflict, then I will **Change** the **Future** for myself and everyone around me.

*Ja. 4:1 What is **Causing** the **Quarrels** and **Fights** among you? Don't they come from the **Evil Desires** at **War Within You**?*

*Mt. 5:25 "**Settle Matters Quickly** with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into **Prison**."*

Chap. 3 “Lawyer Swap”

Conflicts usually SURPRISE us. They spring up suddenly like a fire explosion. As we both steadily add to the fire, there are sometimes “Pauses” where we are both **TIRED**. During that pause, we each decide to **calm** or **escalate** the situation.

This tension is a small fire. During each pause we decide whether to pour WATER or GAS on this fire.



Why am I so Quick to Defend Myself?

We are **all** SELFISH! We want our **perspectives**, our **emotions**, our **desires** and our **goals** to be treated by this **other** person as SO MUCH **MORE IMPORTANT** than **their** perspectives, **their** emotions, **their** desires and **their** goals. All of that selfishness is **GAS** on the fire of this tension. In each tension situation, we have an imaginary lawyer sitting next to us shouting two things!

MY invisible lawyer is shouting to me:

1. Every **ugly angle** for viewing my ENEMY who is **blocking** my **desires**! My lawyer is **assuming** the **worst** about my enemy and viewing **everything** they **say** and **do** from the most **critical, negative** perspective. My lawyer is horrified at my enemy and determined that the **whole world** must know how **vile, evil, & wrong** my enemy is.



MY invisible lawyer is ALSO shouting to me:

2. Every **wonderful, compassionate, kind, misunderstood, & positive** thing about **me**! My lawyer **always assumes** positive **motives** for me, **even** when I **do** something **terrible, wrong** or **unkind**! My lawyer will interrupt, get upset, **defend** me at **every** point and **ONLY** wants my **POSITIVE** points **presented** in this tension. In addition, my lawyer **feels** very **SORRY** for me and continually **tells** me how **pure, innocent** and **misunderstood** I am.



The more **emotional** I get,
the **LOUDER** my lawyer **SHOUTS** these two subjects to me!

The Pause that Changes My Life!

Let's be real! It is very **rare** to pause **BEFORE** MY lawyer convinces me to pour **SOME gas** on the fire! There are a **very few** individuals who have learned the wisdom of immediately agreeing to a "*Lawyer Swap*" **before** either person pours **gas** on the fire of this tension.

- Do you know **WHY** that rare, brilliant, wise, mature person does an **EARLY** "*Lawyer Swap*"?
- They do everything right **because** they have done it **WRONG many, many** times! :-)

Everyone eats the **painful plate** of **selfishness** a few times.

- Everyone has to **suffer** from their own selfishness a few times before they are willing to agree to a "*Lawyer Swap*".
- Everyone has to learn that listening to **MY** lawyer will make my life **HARDER** and more **PAINFUL** and that I **never** really **WIN** if I listen to my lawyer.
- Everyone has to learn that if we do a "*Lawyer Swap*", the **BLESSINGS** on my life will increase **EVERY year** for the rest of my life, but if I listen to MY lawyer, the **CURSES** on my life will increase **EVERY year** for the rest of my life.

The longer I wait for a "*Lawyer Swap*" the more long-term damage is done to my soul, my relationships and my overall life.

OK! I am really **TIRED** of this tension & we have paused!

Please tell me **HOW** to do a "*Lawyer Swap*".

If you both agree, it is a very **short** process. Once you both agree to a "*Lawyer Swap*" you each agree to say:

- **ONE** clear **positive** thing about the **OTHER** person and
- **ONE** clear **negative** about your **own attitudes** or **actions**.

The **INSTANT** you both agree to this, two things happen

1. You both immediately **CALM** down and **SLOW** down!
2. You immediately feel **UNCOMFORTABLE** and have absolutely **NO IDEA** what to **say**.

One of the Greatest Moments of your Entire Life!

This first moment of a “*Lawyer Swap*” is a precious GIFT from God. Jesus is showing you how very **blind**, **ugly** and **selfish** you are apart from his grace.

Do you want **proof**?

We could have **10,000** different people in the room who **know you both** and have **listened** to you **both**.

Every single one of those 10,000 people could **easily** and **immediately** point out **2-3** positives about the other person and **2-3** negatives about you.

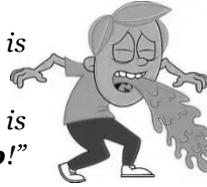
YET you are struggling to find even ONE!

Tension and conflicts, whether personally, politically, or globally are God’s gift to show us how much we NEED Jesus!

By the way – **don’t CHEAT!**

If your negative point about yourself is some obvious, blatant, sanctimonious, manipulation, it is obvious to everyone. If you say something like:

- *“I guess the negative about me is that I **CARE TOO much!**”*
- *“I guess the negative about me is that I **TRY TOO hard to help!**”*



*You just made
10,000 people
throw up!*

Jesus Help Me!

This is a moment to CRY out to God. Jesus will never be more **real** or **actively involved** in your life than at this moment. If you sincerely ask him to **show** you what the **OTHER** person’s **lawyer** would say, Jesus will **guide** you **powerfully** and **personally**.

When Jesus opens your mind, say something **honest** about yourself like:

- *“My **tone** was way too **harsh**”*
- *“I should **not** have **raised my voice**”*
- *“I should **not** have **interrupted** you.”*
- *“I did **not** believe the **best** about you.”*
- *“I jumped too **quickly** to a **wrong conclusion**.”*



With the other person say the **KINDEST** thing you can think of in the **kindest** way:

- “I really **appreciate** that you...”
- “Your **best** point that really **helped** me was...”
- “You are really **great** at...”
- “It means a lot to me that you have **constantly done** this **good** thing toward me in the **past**.”



Your positive point about the other person does **not** even have to be **related** to the subject of the tension. You can also highlight **PAST patterns** of positive traits.

Anything positive you say about them is a **huge** amount of **water** poured on this tension.

The Lawyer Swap only buys you a minute!

The instant you each have done a “*Lawyer Swap*” and each say ONE positive thing about the other person and ONE negative thing about yourself; you **only** have a **minute**.

YOUR lawyer is **BEGGING** to be let out of his cage and to come **roaring back** to defend you more or to criticize the other person. **Any more discussion** of the details of the issue will allow YOUR lawyer out of his cage and you will **lose all** you **gained**.

If you change direction **QUICKLY**, this can be one of the **most positive** experiences in your life!

NOW is when you focus on the **GOALS!**



This is why you immediately bring up the powerful, direction setting word “**Research**”.

Define the 2 Goals

1. **Research – NOT Resolution**
2. **Peace & Space**

Goal # 1 - Research – NOT Resolution!

The **most dangerous** people are those who want to **keep talking** until we **Resolve EVERYTHING!**

We will **NEVER** resolve everything on this earth.

In **most** strife situations, we won't even **begin** to understand all the factors involved for **decades**.

20 years from now everyone will see **ten times** more than anyone can see right now



In addition, many times the Strife Subjects have **NOTHING** to do with **WHY** we are arguing. Many times, we are **arguing** because we are **Tired, Stressed** and **Grumpy**.

Why is Research ALWAYS a WIN?

The instant you bring up the word "*Research*" everyone gets on the **SAME Team!** Research is a **humble** word that causes you **both** to admit that you do **NOT see** the **whole** picture but that you are **willing to learn** and **gather more information**.

Research also loudly communicates a deep **desire** to find a **compromise** that **pleases BOTH** of you!

Quickly - Start Suggesting Research "*Experiments*"

"*Experiments*" is another **gorgeous** word that gives **direction**, **humility** and a sense of others **fighting FOR** me and **wanting** to be **WITH** me. The instant one of you says: "*Let's try to find some research experiments that will help us both have a WIN here!*" the conflict is over.

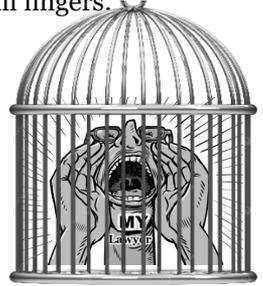
It is usually pretty easy to find ideas. The **SHORTER** the research experiment the **BETTER!** Your goal here is to get a mutual win and then get out of the room **ASAP!**

Goal # 2 - Peace and Space

FOOLISH people actually **expect** to **LIKE** each other after a tension discussion. Of course, we still do NOT like each other after a successful time of “*Lawyer Swap*” and an agreed upon “*Research Experiment*”. We have found a short term direction but irritation still lingers.

Decisions are the engine. Emotions are the caboose. It takes a while for emotions to catch up to our decisions.

Even when we handle everything perfectly, we still can still feel grumpy and our lawyer is still screaming, wanting to be let out of his cage!



An Hour Later – We are SO PROUD of Ourselves!

An hour later, **MY** loud lawyer is **completely gone!**

I had a moment to catch my breath and the **more** I **thought** about how we handled this situation, the more **IMPRESSED** I am with **BOTH** of us! Wow! We **BOTH** operated at a level of **maturity** and **wisdom** that very **FEW** people ever reach.

My **grumpiness** is completely **gone**.

I find myself **EXCITED** about the future and thinking of more “*Research Experiments*” that would make us both happy and successful.

I see God’s hand on my life. I realize that **Satan** and my fleshly lawyer wanted to use this moment to bring **decades of destruction** into my life.



Jesus has **rescued** us and now God will use this moment to bring **powerful PROMOTION** into every area of our lives.

What if I am the **ONLY One** doing a “*Lawyer Swap*”?

The very Biblical goals of “*Peace & Space*” have even greater application when only **ONE** person has the **humility** to do a “*Lawyer Swap*”.

A “*Lawyer Swap*” is the **single greatest act of humility** anyone can ever take. For the one person who is willing to take this huge “*Lawyer Swap*” step, the Lord Jesus is so **PLEASED** with them.

His rewards are amazing.

However, **AFTER** you do the “*Lawyer Swap*” in a solo role, you will find the **other** person really **PLEASED** and **you** feel a bit **empty** and **used**.

This empty feeling is Jesus teaching you to **ADD** “*Peace & Space*” to this relationship. This person is **not** a **SAFE** person and you need to **move further away** from them.

*Rom. 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you,
Live at **PEACE** with **Everyone!***

Let’s learn from Abram’s example of “*Peace & Space*”.

*Gen. 13:8 So Abram said to Lot,
"Let's **Not** have any **Quarreling** between you and me, or
between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives.
⁹ Is not the whole land before you?
Let's **Part Company**. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right;
if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."*

God is a good Father and he will discipline this person in **HIS** way. That discipline will probably be many years in the future.

During that time, the **promotions** will **increase** in **your** life while the **destruction increases** in **their** life.

CONCLUSION - The Biggest Test you will ever face!

You have passed the biggest test you will ever face your future is so bright!

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that are currently or soon available.

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