

GROWTH GROUP STUDY

REFLECT

1. *Did you ever have a nickname? How did you get the nickname? Who gave it to you? Did you like it?*¹

“Sometimes nicknames reveal more about the attitude of the giver than they do about the receiver. However, all nicknames share one common feature: they often become a part of the person’s identity. When you think about the person, the nickname and its significance always come to your mind” (Newman, 29-30).

ENCOUNTER

2. Read Philippians 4:1-3. List the ways Paul described the believers at Philippi.

“To interact with others in a manner that pleases the Lord, we must view others as God views them. As a result, Paul reminded the Philippians of their relationship to each other in God’s sight.

“In the midst of conflict we often make statements that evaluate another person. ‘She is always so stubborn.’ ‘He never listens.’ ‘They are so ignorant.’ ‘She’s not the brightest crayon in the box.’ Sometimes the statements are so heinous that they remain only in our thoughts. But at times, those heinous thoughts come out in hurtful words” (Newman, 30).

3. *What words of evaluation influenced your thoughts and responses toward others involved in a recent conflict?*

Our own evaluations often replace God’s evaluation of the person. Paul reminded the Philippians of their shared identity in Christ—His work in them and their past work for Him.

¹ The content and questions of this study have been reproduced from Jeff Newman’s book *Conflict Under Control* with the permission of the author. Jeff Newman, *Conflict Under Control: Responding with the Mind of Christ*. Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 2007, pages 29-37.

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4. Read the passages below. Note Paul's use of the term "brother." *Why do you think Paul chose to address his readers as brothers? What can you learn from this designation as you face the conflicts in your life?*

- Galatians 6:1, 2
- Philippians 1:12-18
- 2 Thessalonians 3:11-16
- Philemon 10-21

TRANSFORM

5. Evaluate yourself. *In recent conflicts, did your words and actions demonstrate that you saw other believers as brothers and sisters in Christ?*

6. *Did your words and actions demonstrate that you saw other believers as beloved?*

7. *How might your words and actions have differed from if you had viewed the other person from these perspectives?*

8. *Do you need to confess any sin to God? From whom do you need to seek forgiveness? What new commitments of obedience should you make?*

"The way God sees and evaluates people must become our way of seeing and evaluating others. When we strive to see others as God sees them, we will see people as created in the image of God. We will remember that Christ died for the sins of all mankind. We will remind ourselves that as believers, we share the same relationship, purpose, and destiny. When we seek to see others from God's perspective, His word will then become the standard by which we evaluate our own actions and the actions of others. As a result, we will grow in Christlikeness in the midst of the conflicts of life in the fallen, broken world" (Newman, 36).

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Conflict Under Control by Jeff Newman