

Main Street Church - Life Group Guide

Series: Together for Good

Message 4: Don't Win the Argument & Lose the Relationship

Speaker: Shawn Vandop - Lead Pastor

Date: March 15, 2026



Connect (30min)

1. Read [Romans 12:9-18](#) & Open in Prayer
2. If you could become knowledgeable in an interest or ability that you are not currently good at, what would it be?
3. Were any of you in a debating class or club in school? How effective were you and how enjoyable was it?
4. Have you ever "won an argument" and "lost the relationship?" – Briefly share.

Message Discussion (45min)

1. Why Are Relationships So Complicated? READ: [Proverbs 30:18-19](#), [Genesis 3:6-12](#)

Question:

The Book of Proverbs says relationships are "too amazing" to fully understand.

How have you experienced the complexity of marriage (or close relationships)?

In what ways does Genesis 3 show us that pride, not personality, is the real source of conflict?

Discuss: Where does pride most often show up in your arguments:

defensiveness, sarcasm, shutting down, needing to be right?

Practical Application: This week, when conflict arises, what could change if you said internally:

"This is not just about the issue. Pride is involved."

2. Anger Without Sin. READ: [Ephesians 4:26-27](#), [Proverbs 15:1](#)

Question:

What is the difference between *righteous anger* and *sinful anger*?

How did Michal cross the line from confrontation into contempt?

Discuss: How does tone affect the outcome of conflict in your relationships?

Practical Application: For the next 7 days, remove sarcasm from your communication.

If you feel irritation rising, ask: *"Is my goal to understand or to wound?"*

3. Contempt - The Silent Killer. Read: [2 Samuel 6:16](#), [Hebrews 12:15](#)

Question: The text says Michal *"despised him in her heart."*

Why is contempt more dangerous than anger? How can bitterness quietly grow over time?

Discuss: What are early warning signs of contempt in marriage?

(e.g. eye-rolling, mockery, withdrawal, comparison)

Practical Application: Identify one lingering resentment you may be holding.

Pray specifically over it this week and ask God to soften your heart.

4. Fighting Thoroughly, Not Vindictively. Read: [James 1:19–20](#), [2 Samuel 6:20–22](#)

Question: David responded by attacking Michal’s father.

Why do we tend to “bring up the past” in arguments?

What does James 1:20 teach us about anger’s limitations?

Discuss: What does it look like to stay on the issue instead of attacking the person?

Practical Application:

In your next disagreement, what would happen if you committed to:

- *No historical references*
- *No comparisons*
- *No “you always / you never” statements*
- *Stay on one issue only.*

5. What Are You Really Fighting About? Read: [Proverbs 4:23](#), [James 4:1–2](#)

Question: James says conflicts come from *desires at war within us*.

What deeper issues often sit underneath surface-level arguments (control, respect, feeling unseen, insecurity)?

Discuss:

Is there a recurring argument in your marriage (or other relationship) that may be about something deeper?

6. Barrenness vs. Fruitfulness. Read: [2 Samuel 6:23](#), [Galatians 5:22–23](#)

Question: The story ends with barrenness.

What does relational “barrenness” look like in a marriage? What does spiritual fruitfulness look like?

Discuss: Is your marriage (or close relationship) currently marked more by cold distance or growing tenderness?

Practical Application: Have everyone think of one intentional act of kindness this week that expects nothing in return and then commit to doing that for their spouse or friend.

7. Forgive as the Lord Forgave You. Read: [Colossians 3:13](#), [Matthew 6:14–15](#)

Question: What does it practically mean to forgive “as the Lord forgave you”?

How does remembering the Gospel change the way we approach conflict?

Discuss: Why is forgiveness not the same as pretending something didn’t hurt?

8. Protecting the Covenant. Read: [Ephesians 5:25–33](#), [Ecclesiastes 4:12](#)

Question: How does marriage reflect Christ and the Church?

In what ways does “winning” an argument damage covenant trust?

Discuss: At the end of your life, what kind of marriage, friendships, relationships do you want to look back on?

PRAYER (15min)

>> Set aside 15min to Pray together as a group. Break into groups of 3-4 people to enhance this time.

- **Part 1: How can we pray for you and your key relationships?**

- a. With God b. With Family c. With Friends**

Share specific needs and requests and pray for one another.

- **Part 2: Who is one other person in your life that we can pray for?**

Share their specific needs and pray for one another.

FYI

>> Share [announcements](#) and confirm plans for your next Life Group meeting.

- **Partnership Class.** Sunday, April 12. 6pm. mainstreetchurch.ca/growthtrack
- **Set Free Retreat.** April 17-18. mainstreetchurch.ca/set-free
- **Hearing God Workshop.** Sundays, April 19-May17. mainstreetchurch.ca/hearing-god