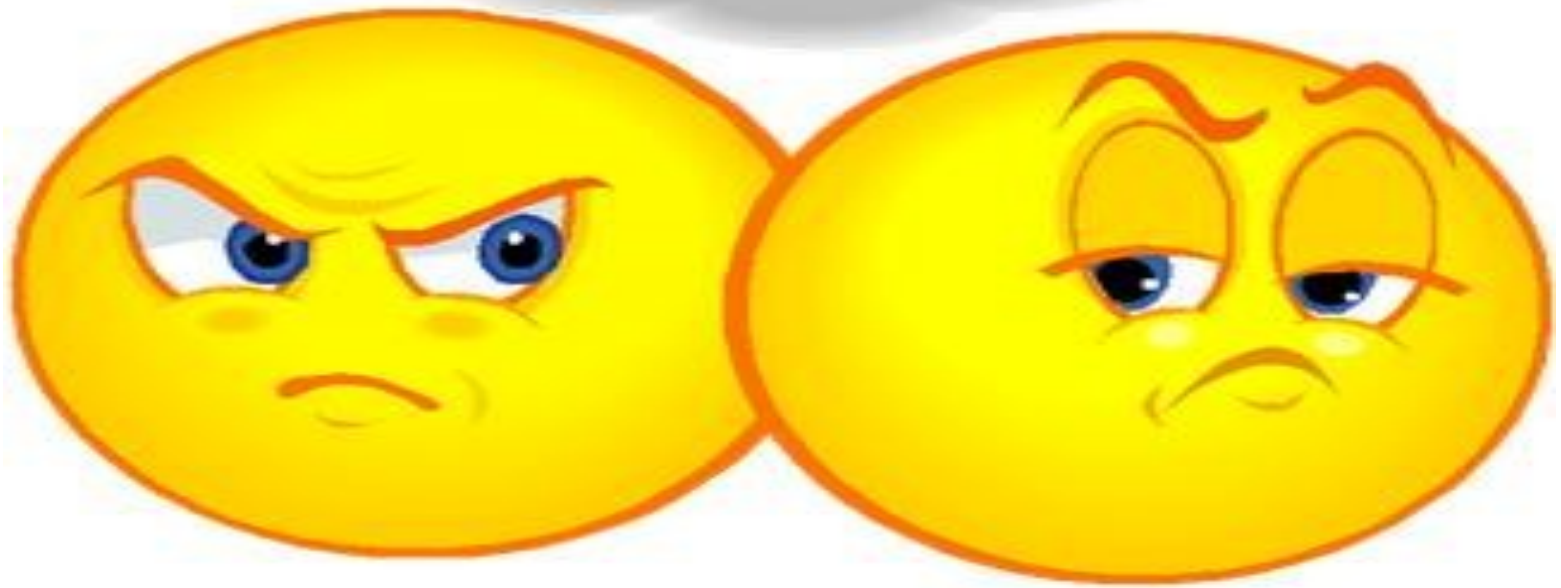


# DEALING WITH CONFLICT



**Goal:**  
Face Conflict as God's Child

**Scripture Verses:**  
Matthew 5:21-26, 38-48  
Romans 12:14-21  
1 John 4:17-21

## Choose Your Opening

### Option 1: Tollbooth Bully

Stand outside your "meeting room" door. As your child/children come to meet, stop them at the door and demand a quarter. If they don't have one or won't give you one, make them stand outside of the room.

Once you are ready to begin the lesson, allow everyone inside and **Ask:**

\*How did you feel when I demanded a quarter before you could enter the room?

\*Why did you respond as you did?

\*How was this experience like being bullied in real life?

**Say:** Since the beginning of time, there have been people who love to bully others into giving them what they want. Although we often hear about how we're supposed to "stand up" to bullies there are some dangers involved in doing so. Let's learn biblical ways to deal with bullies.

### Option 2: Feeding the Fish

*(For this activity, you'll need a large bowl of popped popcorn)*

Place the bowl of popcorn on a table. Tell kids to pretend the room is a giant fish-tank with three kids of fish in it. Choose one child each, to be one of 3 type fish. A Freshwater Shark, a Whining Darter, or Grouper. Have each child find an area of the room to be their "nest".

**Say:** I'm going to feed the fish in my fish tank. When I say, "Let's eat," all of you should act true to your identities. Groupers, you are cautious fish, so you should come to the table, take five pieces of food, and carry them to your nest before coming back to get five more pieces. Whining Darters, you don't know anything about gathering your own food, so you depend on other fish to feed you. All you can do is come to the table and beg other fish to feed you. When someone gives you food, take it to your nest and then come back and beg for more. Freshwater Sharks, you are aggressive. You get your food by taking it from other fish. If you approach any of these other fish and demand their food, they must give it to you. You then must take your newly acquired food to your nest before demanding more food from others. Ready? Let's eat!

After 5 minutes, call time and **Ask:**

\*How do you feel about the role you and others played in this activity?

\*How are the roles some people played like real-life bullies?

\*How did you deal with the bullies in this activity?

\*How do you deal with bullies in real life?

**Say:** Today we're going to talk about biblical ways to deal with bullies.

# THE BIBLE EXPERIENCE

## **Bully Busters**

*(For this activity, provide Bibles, paper, and pencils)*

Give each child a Bible, some paper, and a pencil. **Say:** Each of you is a Bully Buster that helps people deal with bullies. I'm going to give you a Bible passage to read. You should list one thing people should do to deal with bullies and one thing people should not do, according to your passage. Then write your ideas on paper. Be prepared to report your findings with everyone else.

Assign each child one of these passages: Matthew 5:21-26; Matthew 5:38-48; Romans 12:14-21; and 1 John 4:17-21.

Have the kids share their findings. For example, they may say things such as "People should make peace with bullies", "Don't hate them." "Don't fight back, let God punish them", "Wish good for them."

Then **Ask:**

- \*Why does God tell us these ways to deal with bullies?
- \*What biblical advice is easiest for you to follow? Most difficult? Explain.

**Say:** God has given you these guidelines for dealing with bullies. God has also given you caring adults to help you, such as teachers, pastors, parents, and your Children's Pastor. If you need help handling a tough situation, feel free to ask advice from any of these people who care about you.



## Give and Take

Get kids to stand shoulder to shoulder, facing in opposite directions, so that your left feet and left shoulders are together. **Say:** Now reach out, and lock left hands with your partner. When I say "go", try to push or pull your partner off-balance so that his or her right foot moves. We'll try this three times to see who does the best,. Ready? Go!

After three tries, call time, and **Say:** Now think of the biblical ways to deal with bullies. Let's try this activity again, only this time, respond in a God-honoring way.

See how kids respond. They might let a partner win, talk out a compromise, or put an arm around another and say, "I wish you the best."

Then **Ask:**

- \*How did you feel as you were doing this activity the first three times?
- \*How did responding in a biblical way make you feel?
- \*Which response felt the best? Explain

**Say:** We often respond to bullying by getting tough with the other person, which can make matters worse. Biblical responses can bring peace in conflicts.

## *Choose Your Closing*

### **Option 1: The Bully in Me**

*(For this activity, you'll need newsprint and markers)*

Give each child a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Have them draw a human "bully" shape on their newsprint. **Say:** Before we can do anything constructive about the bullies in our lives, we must admit that there are times we bully other people. Think about one time you may have been guilty of bullying someone, such as a time you threatened a younger brother or sister so you could get your own way. Write the situations on your newsprint.

After everyone is finished writing, have them place their newsprint bullies in the center of the room. If possible, join hands in a circle around the newsprint bullies. **Pray:** God, please forgive us for bullying others. Help us respond in a Christian way to those who bully us. Amen.

### **Option 2: Let's Talk**

Have kids think about one bully they have trouble with (they don't have to use names) and one response they'll use to deal with him or her. Then have them name one person they have bullied (such as a younger brother or sister) and say one way they'll change their behavior.

Close with a prayer, asking for God's strength and help in dealing with bullies.