

# OUR THEOLOGY AND ATTITUDES



**SESSION 2**  
HANDOUTS



# SESSION 2

## OUR THEOLOGY AND ATTITUDES



### Introduction

This session has two different strands. Firstly, it explores different ways the Bible can speak to us in relation to conflict. Secondly, it considers how our family background shapes our attitude to conflict.

### Session Objectives

- To deepen the growing relationships of trust within the group.
- To explore different ways that the Bible can speak to us in relation to conflict.
- To reflect on experience within our family of origin as the initial human community which deeply shapes us, and affects our attitude to conflict.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session participants will have:

- Considered different ways that the Bible speaks to us.
- Engaged with different ways the Bible can speak to us in relation to tension and conflict.
- Reflected on how disagreement, tension and conflict were approached within their family of origin, and noticed how this has shaped their subsequent attitude and preferences.
- Reflected on how they typically approach disagreement, tension and conflict today in their home, work or ministry setting, and noticed the relationship between this and what they learnt during childhood.
- Recognised – or at least begun to recognise – how their family childhood experience continues to shape them today, whether in reaction to or in considered response to that experience.

### Overview of Session Segments

Welcome:	Introduction to session and review of last session
Way in:	Recognising how the Bible speaks to us
Pointer 1:	How the Bible can speak to us about conflict
Explore 1:	How the Bible can speak to us about conflict
Explore 2:	Engaging with our experience using the Human Rainbow
Pointer 2:	Reflecting on the Human Rainbow exercise
Review:	Looking back over the session
Feedback:	Completing written feedback

### Handouts

Handout 1:	Introduction and overview of Session 2
Handout 2:	Biblical texts and tasks for small groups
Handout 3:	Human Rainbow: reflections
Handout 4:	Feedback form for participants (for return to course leader)



# BIBLICAL TEXTS



Texts taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Anglicised Edition.

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## Romans 12:9-21

<sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup>love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. <sup>11</sup>Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord, <sup>12</sup>Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the

lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' <sup>20</sup>No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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## John 18:10-12

<sup>10</sup>Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. <sup>11</sup>Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?'

<sup>12</sup>So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

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## Acts 4:18-22

<sup>18</sup>So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup>But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; <sup>20</sup>for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.'

<sup>21</sup>After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened. <sup>22</sup>For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

## Luke 24:13-35

<sup>13</sup>Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, <sup>14</sup>and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. <sup>15</sup>While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, <sup>16</sup>but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. <sup>17</sup>And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. <sup>18</sup>Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' <sup>19</sup>He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, <sup>20</sup>and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. <sup>21</sup>But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. <sup>22</sup>Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, <sup>23</sup>and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. <sup>24</sup>Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.'

<sup>25</sup>Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! <sup>26</sup>Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' <sup>27</sup>Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

<sup>28</sup>As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. <sup>29</sup>But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup>When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup>Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup>They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' <sup>33</sup>That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup>They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' <sup>35</sup>Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

## Luke 15:11-32

<sup>11</sup>Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!<sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

<sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

# Reflecting on Ways the Bible can Speak to us in Relation to Conflict

## Group 1: Instructions and Guiding Principles

Look together at Romans 12:9-21 on the handout.

1. In this passage, what might offer you a helpful instruction or principle for handling conflict? How might this instruction be helpful to you?
2. (If time) Can you identify another passage from the Bible which offers a different but helpful instruction or principle for handling some aspect of conflict between people?

## Group 2: Examples, both Good and Bad

Look together at John 18:10-12 and Acts 4:18-22 on the handout.

1. Have you ever been tempted to take violent action? Have you ever had to stand up for something you strongly believed in, despite opposition or criticism from others?
2. In what ways might these examples from Peter's life speak to the situations you identified in question 1?
3. (If time) What other examples are there in the Bible of people who can inspire us to handle tensions or conflict with others well, or can warn us what to avoid?

## Group 3: Stories we Inhabit

Look together at Luke 24:13-35 on the handout.

1. Can you identify an example of when you were disappointed or hurt by how a relationship worked out or went wrong in some way?
2. In what ways might this story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus speak to the situation you've identified in question 1? As you look back, are there ways that you can now recognise that God was with you, although it may not have felt that way at the time?
3. (If time) Is there another example in the Bible of a story which you think might be helpful to enter into and inhabit in reflecting on an experience of conflict with another person?

## Group 4: Big Picture of God's Work in the World

Look together at Luke 15:11-32 on the handout.

1. Have you ever felt that you were in the right and another person was in the wrong? Can you identify an example of when you felt you were unfairly treated, even though you'd not done something wrong?
2. In what ways might this parable of the two brothers speak to the situation you identified in question 1? As you look back, are there ways that you can recognise that God was compassionate both towards you, and towards the other person whom you felt was in the wrong or unfair to you?
3. (If time) Is there another example in the Bible of God's reconciliatory work with humanity which might be helpful to reflect on when experiencing conflict with another person?





# HUMAN RAINBOW

## Reflections



Make a note for yourself of an important reminder or a new insight that came to you through the Human Rainbow exercise:

Some other reflections to bear in mind:

- Our early experience in our families is hugely formative for the rest of our lives. We're not bound by it, but it shapes us.
- As adults, we may choose a different approach to those we experienced as children. However, when we are under pressure, we can find ourselves reverting to the patterns and approaches that we experienced in childhood.
- Our own experience is usually the one we use to measure what is 'normal'. But other people's 'normal' can be very different to our own. In any group, there will be a spread of people's experience and preferences for how to approach tension, disagreement and conflict. Others with different preferences may have valuable insights to offer us.



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### Participant Feedback Form

Please complete this form at the end of the session. Thank you.

**1. Please circle your evaluation of the following aspects of the session where 1=Unhelpful and 6=Very Helpful:**

A. The content provided in the session 1 2 3 4 5 6

B. The way the session enabled you to learn 1 2 3 4 5 6

C. How your leaders led and facilitated the session 1 2 3 4 5 6

D. How participants worked and interacted together 1 2 3 4 5 6

E. THE SESSION OVERALL 1 2 3 4 5 6

**2. What you most appreciated or found helpful about the session was:**

**3. One thing you see yourself applying or using from the session is:**

**4. What you would change or like to be different about the session (either the content, or the way learning was facilitated, or both) was:**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback form.

**GROUP:**

**COURSE LEADERS:**



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### Course Leader's Feedback Form

Please complete a form at the end of each session. Please respond to question 5 after reading your participants' feedback forms. Thank you.

**1. Please circle your evaluation of the following aspects of the session where 1=Unhelpful and 6=Very Helpful:**

A. Guidance provided in the Leader's Guide	1	2	3	4	5	6
B. PowerPoint slides, handouts, scripts and all other materials	1	2	3	4	5	6
C. Quality and appropriateness of the content	1	2	3	4	5	6
D. Process offered for presenting content and enabling learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
E. How you led and facilitated this session	1	2	3	4	5	6
F. How participants worked and interacted together in this session	1	2	3	4	5	6
G. THE SESSION OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6

**2. What you most appreciated or found helpful about the materials provided for you was:**

Thank you for taking time to complete this feedback form. Please then scan it as a PDF file, and email it to Bridge Builders:  
**bb@bbministries.org.uk**

Only send the course leaders' feedback form.

Bridge Builders will seek to improve Growing Bridgebuilders in the light of feedback from all the course leaders.

**COURSE LEADERS:**

**LOCATION:**

**GROUP SIZE:**

**TYPE OF PARTICIPANTS:**

**3. What you most struggled with in leading the session was:**

**4. What you would change or like to be different about the materials provided for you is:**  
(Note: this could relate either to the content, or to the process for facilitating learning, or both)

**5. Having read all the participants' feedback comments what you would most draw attention to is:**

**6. Any other comments:**