

Getting Along With Siblings

“Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another.”—Colossians 3:13.

How to resolve conflicts is an important skill to learn, and in the family is a good place to start. Use the questions below to identify, analyze, and resolve a conflict you have with a sibling.



IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

Which sibling do you find it most difficult to get along with?

What issue is most likely to provoke a conflict with that sibling?

How does the conflict usually develop?

My sibling will . . . (describe the action)

which causes me to . . . (describe your reaction)

which leads to . . . (describe the consequence)



ANALYZE THE PROBLEM

THE BIBLE SAYS:
“Look out not only
for your own inter-
ests, but also for the
interests of others.”
(Philippians 2:4) With
that in mind, try to
see the conflict from
your sibling’s point
of view.

What might your sibling have been thinking at the time of the conflict?

If your sibling were to tell the story from his or her point of view, what would he or she say about *your* role in the problem?

What merit can you see in your sibling’s viewpoint?



RESOLVE THE PROBLEM

Is there room for negotiation or compromise? If so, what would you suggest that it be?

What can *you* do differently the next time so that a disagreement does not escalate into a full-blown argument?



BIBLE PRINCIPLE LIST

Which principles from the list below could you apply the next time you have a similar conflict?

- ☐ “Love one another intensely from the heart.”—1 Peter 1:22.
- ☐ “Let your reasonableness become known.”—Philippians 4:5.
- ☐ “Do not be quick to take offense, for the taking of offense is the mark of a fool.”—Ecclesiastes 7:9, footnote.
- ☐ “Beginning a fight is like opening a floodgate; before the quarrel breaks out, take your leave.”—Proverbs 17:14.
- ☐ “Where there is no wood, the fire goes out, and where there is no slanderer, quarreling ceases.”—Proverbs 26:20.
- ☐ “Why . . . do you look at the straw in your brother’s eye but do not notice the rafter in your own eye?”—Matthew 7:3.

Finally, write down one thing you appreciate or admire about your sibling.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

THE BIBLE SAYS:

“Thoughtless speech is like the stabs of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is a healing.”—Proverbs 12:18.

“When my dad was in the hospital for an extended period of time, it was hard for me to visit him because I couldn’t drive. I told my brother I wanted to get a driver’s license, but he said he didn’t have time to teach me how to drive. Even when I explained why I needed it, he ignored me and almost dismissed my problem. I threw a fit, telling my brother that he didn’t care that I didn’t get to see my dad and that he never thinks of how I feel. That really upset him. We were both yelling at each other, saying how we each thought the other one was being inconsiderate.”—Karina.

If you were Karina, how would *you* have resolved this situation?

WHAT KARINA DID: “The next morning, my brother and I had a good talk. He apologized for getting so upset and told me about all the pressure he was under. I didn’t know how much he had on his plate. Once he told me how he was really feeling, I apologized for trying to put even more on his plate. I know that I had the best of intentions, but it wasn’t the right time to bring it up.”

