

Lesson 7 / April 21, 2024

Lasting Peace

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 7**Focus:**

Only God can make lasting peace a reality.

Echoes Focus

That your students desire the reality of a changed heart because of God's working in their lives.

Lesson 7**Bible Basis:**

Micah 4:1-4;
James 4:1-4

Lesson 7**Memory Verse:**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. —Romans 15:13

Echoes Verse

"I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."
Ezekiel 36:26

Your students will discuss our culture's obsession with conflict and the consequences that result as they explore God's lasting peace.

Materials:

None

Using the question below as a starting point, generate a discussion with your class concerning the amount of conflict in the world today.

➤ **What are some instances of conflict that you've seen in the world recently?** (Sadly, there's a lot to choose from. It seems like every day something new comes out in the news about more fighting, disagreements, and aggression occurring.)

Conflict of all types is such a fixture of our world! An organization called International Crisis Group outlined the following as the top ten major conflicts to watch in our world this year:

Gaza
Wider Middle East War
Sudan
Ukraine
Myanmar
Ethiopia
The Sahel
Haiti
Armenia-Azerbaijan
U.S.-China

In addition to these violent conflicts, we've seen also seen conflict internationally and in the United States regarding politics, racism, sexism, and so much more. Sadly, it seems as though much of the conflict in our world isn't put towards the goal of resolving the conflict and building unity. Instead, much of the conflict seems to further divide us.

➤ **What are some instances you've seen of conflict for the sake of division instead of unity?** (Accept all reasonable answers.)

The truth is that violence is everywhere around us, and while violent and divisive media has only existed for the last hundred years, the earth has been at war since the beginning of time. From the earliest recorded war between Sumer and Elam in Mesopotamia in 2700 BC, to today's ongoing fighting across the globe, it feels like humans are destined to be in conflict with one another.

Today, we'll see that this isn't just a feeling; sadly, our human nature will always keep us at war. *Thankfully*, there is Someone who can make lasting peace a reality. Let's take a look.

Source: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/10-conflicts-watch-2024>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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STEP 4 

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Ezekiel 36:26

Materials:

- Pens/pencils
- Paper
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies with them to class.

Thus far, we've discussed that lasting peace can only be achieved through Christ, but we have to allow Him to change our hearts for this to be realized. First, let's analyze our current tendencies in order to figure out how we can improve.

➤ **What are some of the ways the world resolves conflicts?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Some ideas to guide your thinking are lawsuits, physical violence, or blocking the person/ignoring the issue.)

➤ **Do these resolution methods offer lasting peace or a temporary solution? Explain your answer.**

Most of the things we do to "resolve" conflicts are more about making ourselves feel better than about actually reconciling our issues and returning to a place of love and peace once again.

Thankfully, in the Book of Matthew, Jesus provided us with a roadmap for how to resolve conflict quickly and absolutely.

Write the following list on the whiteboard (or screenshared document). Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). Instruct your class to copy down the following conflict resolution steps and Scripture references on their papers.

1. Do it Quickly (Matthew 5:23-25)
2. Face to Face (Matthew 18:15)
3. One on One (Matthew 18:15)
4. Get Help (Matthew 18:16-17)

After going through the conflict resolution steps, guide your students to use the remainder of class time in quiet prayer in order to assess what conflicts they are holding onto in their own lives.

Challenge your students to commit to resolving at least one conflict in their lives this upcoming week using the resolution steps.

Close in prayer, thanking God for sending His Son to our Earth and making lasting peace a reality.

Conflict resolution source:

Sermon: Jesus' Plan for Resolving Conflict – Matthew 5, 18

<https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/sermon-jesus-plan-resolving-conflict-matthew-5-18>

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