

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

***Solving Family Conflict***  
**Genesis 13:1-18**

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

## Leaders' Responsibilities:

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## Prior to this Coming Session:

**Gathering Time Leader:**

**Bible Study Leader:**

**Worship Time Leader:**

Copies of the scripture Psalm 34: 11-14 should have been saved from last week. Use them to introduce this week's worship time. Save the sheets for later.

## **Music Sources:**

**Father Abraham**, [www.childbiblesongs.com](http://www.childbiblesongs.com)

**Step by Step**, *WOW Worship*, 2003; *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #480; CCLI#696994

**I Give You My Heart**, *WOW Worship*, 2003; *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #528; CCLI#1866132

**Amazing Grace**, Many sources

**Gathering Time:** (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Solving Family Conflict*****Focal Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

**Background Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

**Main Idea**

Abraham and Lot found and implemented a win-win solution to conflict within their family.

**Question to Explore**

What conflict in your family could be solved through seeking a win-win solution?

**Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe how elements in the solution to family conflict practiced by Abraham and Lot could apply to conflict within families today.

**Gathering Together:**

If the children sang *Father Abraham* last week, ask them to participate today by singing the song and teaching it to the adults.

**First thoughts:**

A group of five siblings were faced with legal tangles in implementing the will of their recently deceased father. Much land and many cattle were involved. Some of the family members had spent their lives on the family ranch while others had lived far away and had developed their own careers.

The family had always been a close family. They realized that the most important inheritance their parents had left them was a love for God and for each other. They covenanted together as they began the process of determining how to divide the assets fairly that they would remember their true inheritance. They began their many discussions with prayer and would often stop to pray if the way became difficult.

Even families with fewer assets to divide become alienated when finances are involved. Other issues such as discipline of children, jealousy of a family whose lifestyle is different, and parental favouritism are a few of the divisive issues that families face. Even when an open quarrel does not exist, there may be alienation.

### **Closing the Gathering Time:**

The story of Abraham and Lot is a story of grace extended by an uncle to a nephew. Grace is required in our family relationships as well. We will think together today about how we can extend grace and forgiveness and resolve conflict with those people who should be closest to us – our own family members.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### *Solving Family Conflict*

#### **Focal Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

#### **Background Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

#### **Main Idea**

Abraham and Lot found and implemented a win-win solution to conflict within their family.

#### **Question to Explore**

What conflict in your family could be solved through seeking a win-win solution?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe how elements in the solution to family conflict practiced by Abraham and Lot could apply to conflict within families today.

### **Introduction to your personal study:**

A rural newspaper carried the story of a wealthy elderly woman who had recently passed away. She had never married or had children. Soon members of her extended family began speculating about who would be designated in her will as heirs, and what portion of the estate would belong to them. Then it was discovered that the woman had never made a will. The proper legal authorities stepped in and made arbitrary decisions about the distribution of her wealth. Most members of the extended family were excluded from receiving any of the inheritance they thought was rightfully theirs. They objected strenuously to the distribution of the wealth on the basis of law and made their hurt feelings well known to the few relatives that did receive a share. As a result, there was great animosity among the family and a breakdown of communication. Sadly, this story is all too common in societies today. Very often the distribution of wealth leads to

much trouble in families. This might have been the case in Abraham and Lot's situation had Abraham not been a man of great character.

## **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**”, found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

When Abram's father, Terah, left the land of Ur, he took his orphaned grandson Lot, along with his family to Haran. Abraham, in turn, took Lot with him as he followed God's leading in moving out of Mesopotamia. He travelled throughout Canaan to Egypt and back again.

## **Focusing on the Meaning:**

### **Genesis 13:1-18**

**13:1-4** Abraham travelled, along with his wife and nephew, and all their worldly goods, from Egypt, back to a desert area in what is now Israel. They roamed about searching for a suitable grazing ground for the livestock. Larger and larger grazing areas were needed for the family's herds. Abraham was an incredibly wealthy man in terms of livestock and finances. The family ended up in the region of Bethel, where Abraham had lived previously and had built an altar to the Lord. The building of the altar is significant – it was a place of worship and prayer. Although Abram had stumbled in his relationship with God during his time in Egypt, he always came back to God. Anyone who has a sincere desire to return to God will find Him waiting with open arms.

**13:5, 6** Lot had developed significant numbers of livestock as well. The land they had settled in could not sustain the large herds of both men, besides providing for the needs of the Canaanites and Perizites that lived in that area. It is interesting to note that there were other people observing how this conflict was handled. Sometimes Christians as a group behave badly in full view of our non-Christian neighbours. They are very aware of how we resolve our differences.

**13:7** Abram and Lot's herdsmen began to quarrel over whose animals would be fed and watered. Often the distribution of goods and wealth and maintenance of it is a major area of dispute in families.

**13:8, 9** Abram did not want any conflict in the family. He demonstrated a very generous spirit when he suggested that he and Lot part company and allowed Lot to choose first the area of land he wanted for himself. Abram took the initiative in the resolution of the conflict, demonstrating that he was a 'big' man. Willingness to compromise even to the extent of giving up an economic advantage can often lead to peaceful resolution of conflict.

**13:10** Lot observed that the plains watered by the Jordan River to the east were beautiful like a garden – perhaps a legend had been passed down through the generations that this area was the garden of Eden. Perhaps Lot had often looked toward the well-watered valley and longed to live there. It is true that one does not fall suddenly into sin. There is the time of temptation and flirting with sin before the decision is made to plunge into a sinful lifestyle.

**13:11,12** So Lot made the decision to take the ‘prime’ piece of property and parted company from Abram. Abram continued to live in the mountainous region of Canaan while Lot chose to move to the river plain near the city of Sodom.

**13:13** The city of Sodom was known as a place of great wickedness where men sinned greatly against God. The exact nature of the sin is not elaborated upon, although we understand that homosexuality was involved. The people were morally insensitive and blatant in their sin. Because moral insensitivity is contagious, Christians should be very careful about keeping close company with such individuals. Sometimes the world influences the Christian, rather than the other way around.

**13:14-16** After the separation of the two families, God once again appeared to Abram. From the rugged mountain area, Abram was told to look in every direction as far as he could see. God reiterated his earlier promise to Abram that all the land he could see before him belonged to him and his offspring forever. God promised that Abram’s descendants would be as uncountable as the dust of the earth.

**13:17,18** God invited Abram to travel throughout the area and inspect his gift of land. In many places where he travelled, he built altars and worshiped God to thank Him for his leadership and praise His name. Abram finally settled in the hill country of Canaan in Hebron. There he set up his tents and built an altar. An altar was a place of worship, praise, and commemoration. It demonstrates where Abram’s priorities were – that God was central to everything that happened in his life.

## **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

This passage guides us through the resolution of a problem in Abraham’s and Lot’s families brought about in part by their great wealth. Abraham takes the initiative in solving the problem by being willing to take a ‘back seat’ to a younger relative. The passage also teaches us that we need to be very much aware of how our conflict resolution affects the people around us who may or may not be Christians.

## **For Personal Reflection:**

**What have I learned from this study?**



**What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

**What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***Solving Family Conflict***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

**Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.**

#### **Focal Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

#### **Background Text**

Genesis 13:1-18

#### **Main Idea**

Abraham and Lot found and implemented a win-win solution to conflict within their family.

#### **Questions to Explore**

What conflict in your family could be solved through seeking a win-win solution?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead participants to describe how elements in the solution to family conflict practiced by Abraham and Lot could apply to conflict within families today.

#### **Connect with Life:**

Read through the story of the elderly, unmarried woman presented in the “Introduction to Personal Study” portion of your **Teacher Preparation**.

Invite the group to share similar situations of which they may be aware.

#### **Guide the Study:**

Have someone read the entire passage Genesis 13:1-18.

Request comments on this: What the basis of conflict was in this passage.

Reread verse 7.

Ask the group why the Canaanites and Perizzites were mentioned specifically at this time.

Have the group join with you to recall instances where the unsaved world has been keenly watching the church and Christians as they deal with conflict.

Ask: How are unsaved family members being impacted by conflict?

Discuss the kind of person the group thinks Abram was?

Seek an answer: How did God bless Abram's unselfish gesture?

After reading verses 10 and 11 again, consider whether Lot's choice was a good one.

Pose the question: Do you think Lot came to this decision suddenly?

Set up the following to generate a discussion:

Tell the group: The writer has stated, "Because moral insensitivity is contagious...".

Look for an answer: What does the writer mean?

Again question the group: How does that apply to us today?

Get the group to discuss the pros and cons of the idea of "living in the city of Sodom" for Christians today.

Then ask the class: Does it matter what type of sinful behaviour was/is going on around Lot or around us today?

Ask the group if they believe Abram was satisfied with the outcome of the decision to part ways.

Then ask: How did God continue to bless his faithfulness?

Urge the church to discuss the significance in verse 18 of Abram building an altar.

Encourage brief discussion: What are ways that we today show our allegiance to God?

Now raise the question: What are tangible ways that we demonstrate to others that we are sincere in our faith?

### **Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

The following could be delicate to manage. Be careful with it. Instead, in your church situation, you may choose to simply ask what the members of the group got out of the Bible study today and ask how they might apply the lesson.

Or, if the group seems willing and comfortable to do so, invite a few members to share a personal family conflict they are currently dealing with. Tell the group: Be sure not to tell about situations that could hurt someone if they knew you had shared their story.

Now, have the group share ideas of how they could apply Abram's example so that everyone comes out a winner.

Pray, or have someone else pray specifically for families dealing with stressful situations.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time.** Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

### ***Solving Family Conflict*** **Genesis 13:1-18**

**A youth will lead the following activity and comments.** No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

#### **Family Life and Family Rules**

Family conflict is a given in most teen's lives. Negotiating the tricky years of gaining independence from parents is a challenge for parents and for children. Think of the following questions which might help when conflict arise?

1. Have I done my best to comply with family rules? If not, what are the reasons for non compliance? If the rules seem unfair, can I introduce a way for discussing the rules without anger?
2. Do I believe that my parents have my wellbeing in mind when rules are made?
3. Would it be possible for my family to have a family night when family issues are discussed and clarified and rules decided upon? What would my attitude have to be for such an occasion to be successful?

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Solving Family Conflict***  
**Genesis 13:1-18****Beginning the Service:**

Sing one or more of the following:

**Step by Step**, *WOW Worship*, 2003; *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #480; CCLI#696994

**I Give You My Heart**, *WOW Worship*, 2003; *The Worship Hymnal*, 2008, #528; CCLI#1866132

**Amazing Grace**, Many sources

**Offering:****Praying for the World:**

Ask the Lord to manifest His presence in the Gaza Strip, both to those who already know Him and to the majority who do not. Ask God to encourage and protect His children in miraculous ways. Ask God also to reveal Himself to those who do not yet know Him, using His Word, the witness of His people, the laws of nature, and miraculous events to demonstrate His love and His power. Pray that even as we consider seeking peace in our homes, we will pray that individuals in this war torn area will find peace as well.

**Sharing Guide:**

**This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.**

## **Seek Peace**

### **Psalm 34:11-14; Ephesians 5:21; 6:1-4**

#### **Note to the Worship Leader:**

**In an earlier session, the group read Psalm 34:11-14. If copies of that scripture portion are still available, read the verses together again to cement them in the hearts of the group and to introduce today's worship time.**

#### **Introduction:**

In a previous session, we examined Psalm 34:11-14 in the light of what it meant to make our families a blessing to others. We will examine the passage again today with a focus on the last part of verse 14 which says, ***Seek peace and pursue it.***

First, we must ask what it might mean to seek peace and pursue it. Calm your minds now and think of a peaceful place you enjoy. What are the sensations you feel, the things you see, the smells you smell? Do you have an overall sense of well-being?

Do your thoughts turn to God as you think of this place? Would He be welcome with you there?

Our thoughts may have turned to a special mountain retreat, a favoured fishing hole or a once in a lifetime vacation spot.

Hopefully, we also thought of home. It might be a favourite chair with a good light and treasured books around it; it might be the spot in your bedroom where you relax at the end of a long day. Perhaps it is your piano or other musical instrument which symbolizes a place of peace. Perhaps it is the dining table with a cup of tea. Maybe it is your garden where you like to spend time working or resting.

However humble our homes may be, we need to find those retreat places. Modern day technology makes it more difficult to shut out the world and meditate on the Psalmist's words from the Father to ***"Be still and know that I am God"*** (Psalms 46:10)."

A second element of seeking peace in our homes is directed to children. Ephesians 6:1-3, ***Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise- 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.'***

Parenting studies indicate that parents must balance independence and control and warmth and coldness. Children who experience a great deal of parental control mixed with genuine parental affection may internalize the values of the parents and go on to lead healthy adult lives. However, if too much control and too little love and warmth is

expressed, the values taught may remain outside of the child and may be discarded at the first opportunity.

Children who experience a great deal of freedom mixed with a great deal of parental affection may be healthy emotionally, but may have difficulty in staying with a task or conforming to the demands of the work world as adults. Their value system may not be strong or may be easily influenced by peers.

Children who experience a great deal of freedom mixed with a lack of concern by the parents for the wellbeing of the child may be stunted emotionally and may be confused as to the value system which is appropriate for them.

Many of these principles were contained in Paul's admonition in Ephesians. He first spoke to the children telling them that obedience to parents not only accomplished good things in the present, but allowed for healthy maturity – even a long life.

Paul then went on to say, ***Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*** Exasperating children can be done in many ways but among them lies “over control” and “under control”. A child who is fenced in with rules and regulations may grow up resentful and exasperated. However, a child who has no boundaries may grow up with a poor identity and may develop few internal moral values. This, too, is exasperating.

Our topic for today is “Seek Peace”. If our homes are to be places of peace, parenting skills will play a part. Loving, careful guidance which makes it joyful for children to learn to “obey” will also avoid “exasperating children.”

Earlier in the book of Ephesians, Paul admonished us to ***submit to one another out of reverence to Christ*** (5:21). This verse is important as we think of ways to seek peace in our homes. When every family member is seeking to make sure that other family members have those things they desire and need, peace has a good opportunity to flourish.

### **Call to Commitment:**

Sometimes we harbour disagreements and ill feelings toward siblings, parents or other family members. As we “seek peace” today, let us ask God to confront those feelings, ask forgiveness from God for them and, if appropriate, take a small step toward resolution of the alienation we feel.

### **Concluding the Service:**

**“Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.**

**II Corinthians 13:11**