## Return to Me

A Relationship Series for Sharing Life

A close up of a country road

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Connect Member’s Notes

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2020

# SESSION 2 CONFLICT & DIFFERENCES

***A key to reducing conflict in relationships is the***

***realisation that the other party is not able to meet***

***all your needs.***

**Key Passage:** “*Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.” Ephesians 4:26-27 (ESV)*

### A.INTRODUCTION

A key to highly healthy relationships is the realisation that the other party is not able to meet all your needs. Both parties need to be able to manage and set realistic expectations of the other. Happy people choose not to wish for (or dwell on) something the other party is unable to deliver. Rather than long for the other party to be able to meet their needs in a particular way, they realise the secret is to acknowledge what the other party can do. And be grateful for that.

James says we have conflict because we have different desires (Jam 4:1-2). Paul teaches “Don’t let the sun go down on your anger” (Eph 4:26), but how do we apply this teaching? Does that mean we can never go to bed angry? No, it doesn’t. Sometimes the wiser thing to do is to get rest, have time to think things over and agree to discuss it at a better time. What the scripture teaches is that you need to resolve your differences and not let them simmer in the background for too long.

Poor relationships do not seek to resolve issues of differences. Over time anger builds up and manifests in unhealthy ways, even impacting other relationships. If we handle our anger wisely and swiftly, refusing to indulge in it, we are denying the devil opportunity for further harm.

*“Anyone can become angry, but to be angry with the right person,*

*to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose,*

*and in the right way—this is not easy.” Aristotle*

B. READ SCRIPTURE: James 4:1-4

Additional scriptures (for reference):   
Prov 15:1, Matt 5:21-26, Num 25:4

### C.DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What is anger? Is anger a sin or is it wrong to go to bed angry (Eph 4:26)?**

1. **When differences lead to anger, what are things that get in the way of resolving conflict in your relationships?**

1. **When situations of conflict calm down, how do you know when things are actually resolved with the other person?**

### D.LIVING IT OUT

As we have discussed throughout this session, there are some conflicts that cannot be resolved immediately. Over the next two weeks, take some time to identify at least one difference that you have with your loved one that is a source of conflict. Take time to talk with each other about it, and how you can handle these differences well. Share how you appreciate the difference of the other party and how they can enable you to have a fuller and healthier relationship.

### E.LOOKING FORWARD

In Session 3, we will look at issues of the inner heart and how we can learn to “boss our feelings around”.