COMMUNITY GROUPS

Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

Destined for Conflict

Preached by Josh Dillon

November 1, 2026

Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

In this sermon, Pastor Josh walks us through three interconnected realities of kingdom life. First, conflict is not a fluke or a sign that something has gone wrong. It is the guaranteed experience of those who belong to the kingdom of God. Just as the kingdom of light is always advancing against the kingdom of darkness, followers of Jesus should expect friction, pressure, and opposition as a natural part of their faith journey.

Second, conflict brings us face to face with a real adversary who seeks to uproot and destabilize us. But the good news is that we do not face that adversary alone. God gives us one another. Just as Paul sent Timothy to establish and exhort the Thessalonians, God places people in our lives to help us stand firm. Finally, the church stands in conflict by staying in love. The testimony of kingdom conflict is not bitterness or retreat, but love that grows bigger, not smaller, as we press forward together into whatever space God has called us.

Key Passages

- 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4
- 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3
- 1 Thessalonians 3:8
- 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13
- Hebrews 5:8-9

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, we come before you today as a group of people who each carry our own stories, our own struggles, and our own moments of conflict. We ask that you open our hearts and our minds to what you want to speak to us today. Help us to set aside distraction and pride, and give us ears to hear what your Spirit is saying. We trust that you are present here, that you go before us, and that you are faithful. Have your way in our conversation today. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

Think of a time when someone warned you about something ahead of time and it helped you get through it. What was the situation, and how did preparation make a difference?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.

1. Pastor Josh said that conflict is not a fluke but is a guaranteed reality of kingdom life. How does that reframe the way you think about the hard seasons you have walked through?
2. Paul tells the Thessalonians that he warned them beforehand that suffering would come. Why do you think the church sometimes avoids talking openly about hardship and conflict? What is the cost of silence?
3. The sermon described conflict as two kingdoms coming together, like tectonic plates. Where do you see that kind of tension playing out in your own life right now, whether internally or in the world around you?
4. Paul mentions that Satan hindered his plans, and he uses the word 'tempter' to describe someone who seeks to uproot and shift us from where we are planted. What are some of the specific ways you have felt that kind of pressure in your own faith journey?
5. Pastor Josh emphasized that we do not face the adversary alone, and that Timothy's role was to establish and exhort the church. Who has played that kind of role in your life, and how did their presence help you stand firm?
6. The sermon asked two questions: Who has carried you in this room? And who are you willing to suffer hardship for? How would you answer those questions honestly?

7. Pastor Josh said the testimony of kingdom conflict is love that gets bigger, not smaller. What does it look like practically to respond to conflict with growing love rather than retreat or bitterness?
8. The sermon closed with the challenge to identify the specific space where the kingdom of God is calling you to step into conflict. What is that space for you right now, and what is one step you could take this week to move toward it?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.

This week, identify one specific area of conflict in your life where you sense God calling you to step forward rather than pull back. It might be a relationship that needs repair, a conversation about faith you have been avoiding, a habit you are fighting to break, or a need in your community you have been hesitant to meet. Write it down. Then reach out to one person in your life and ask them to pray for you and check in with you about it by the end of the week. Remember that you are not walking into that space alone. Jesus has gone before you, and the people of God are standing with you.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.

- Conflict is not a sign that something has gone wrong. It is the guaranteed experience of those living as citizens of the kingdom of God in a world that opposes it.
- The enemy seeks to uproot and destabilize us, not always by taking us out completely, but by shifting our foundation so that we can no longer stand firm in our faith.
- God does not leave us to face conflict alone. He gives us the community of the church to establish and exhort us, and we are called to do the same for others.
- The measure of kingdom conflict is not how hard we fight but how much our love grows. The church advances not by mirroring the world's hostility but by love that increases and expands.
- Every space Jesus calls us into is a space He has already entered. We walk in his victory, not our own, and that is the foundation of our courage in conflict.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Lord Jesus, thank you for this time together and for the truth of your word. We confess that conflict is hard and that we do not always face it with the courage or the love that you call us to. But we are grateful that you have gone before us into every difficult space, and that you have given us one another for the journey. Strengthen us this week. Root us deeply in you so that when the pressure comes, we do not shift. Fill us with a love that grows bigger in the face of opposition. And send us out into our real worlds, our families, our workplaces, our neighborhoods, as people who carry the light of your kingdom. We pray all of this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**