

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO KNOW?

Our culture has a tendency to frame conflict using US vs. THEM language. Reflect on the US vs. THEM language you have heard (or used) over the last few months. Write down the conflicts that come to mind using the table below.

Your LG members could fill this out any number of ways. Some people may primarily think of personal or family conflicts. Others may write down conflicts that are more political in nature. Below is an example of what the table could look like:

<p><i>Mormon</i></p> <p><i>Rich</i></p> <p><i>Republican</i></p> <p><i>Atheist</i></p> <p><i>Ex-spouse</i></p> <p><i>Black Lives Matter</i></p> <p><i>Pro-Life</i></p> <p><i>American Citizens</i></p>	<p>VS</p>	<p><i>Christian</i></p> <p><i>Poor</i></p> <p><i>Democrat</i></p> <p><i>Christian</i></p> <p><i>Me</i></p> <p><i>Police</i></p> <p><i>Pro-Choice</i></p> <p><i>Illegal Immigrants</i></p>
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Circle the group(s) of people you tend to identify with the most. Underline the group(s) you identify with least.

Recognizing the way we have been taught to see is the first step to becoming an everyday peacemaker. Doing this activity will help your group members reconsider the ways we have been taught to see and think about different groups of people.

Read John 4:1-42. What US vs. THEM thinking can you find in this story? How did Jesus **see, immerse, contend** and **restore** in this passage?

The way that the Samaritan woman responded to Jesus in this passage indicates a clear US vs. THEM paradigm between Jews and Samaritans. Although Jesus was likely taught not to see or interact with Samaritans, he chose to **see** this woman and engage her in conversation. He **immersed** into her story as they talked about religion, worship and her life. Jesus offered her living water and revealed himself as the Messiah to her even though her past was filled with shame—he **contended** for her wholeness. His words gave her so much hope that she ran into the village and shared her news with everyone, “Could this really be the Messiah?” Jesus spent the next two days among Samaritans, a beautiful image of **restoration**.

WHAT IS MY INITIAL REACTION?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. Reflect on the last conflict you found yourself in-- were you seeking healing or to be right? How do you know?





LIFE GROUPS

LEADER GUIDE

Are there people who struggle to see the humanity in you? How does that affect the way they treat you? How does the way they treat you make you feel?

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

Read James 1:19. Are there perspectives that you find difficult to listen to with curiosity? What would it look like for you to listen longer than is comfortable?

Take a look at the table you created earlier. How is God calling you to **see, immerse, contend** and **restore** in the midst of these conflicts?

Sometimes we are so overwhelmed at the scale of a conflict that we never get started at working for peace. Give your group members permission to start small. They could choose the conflict that resonates with them the most and make a commitment to strike up a conversation with someone who sees things differently than they do (for the sake of listening). Maybe they have friends who use dehumanizing language and God is leading them to put an end to that kind of talk in their circle of influence.

Where have you seen restoration in your Life Group? In your greater community? How can you become better at seeing and celebrating restoration in your life?

