

Christians In Conflict

Matthew 5:23-25; 18:15-17

Introduction:

We must take the initiative to restore peace. Jesus taught that it makes no difference whether you have wronged your brother or he has wronged you. Either way, you are always responsible to initiate efforts toward peace (see Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15). If we are serious about intently pursuing peace, we won't be concerned about which of us is the offending party. We will have one goal: To restore peace in a godly manner. Unresolved conflict between believers is sin and must be treated as such; otherwise, it will spread throughout the body like cancer until it requires radical spiritual surgery. Far better to deal with it when it is easily contained. - Jerry Bridges

Repeat after me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

I. Always Attempt to _____ Conflict _____ (Matthew 5:23-25)

So, when you have an issue with another believer, deal with it quickly. How quick is quick? Ephesians 4:26 says not to let the sun go down on your anger.

II. Endeavor to Meet _____ with the Person With Whom You Have Conflict (Matthew 18:15)

Notice I did not say "Facebook to Facebook" Face to face communication gets harder everyday. Our society is moving further and further away from face to face communication. That used to be the only option. Then came the invention of handwriting, and you could write a letter to someone. After that came the telephone. Followed by email. Then texting. Now, if you are mad at someone, you can just Tweet about it, and the whole world knows. But this is not the way Jesus taught. There is value in face to face confrontation. It is very hard to communicate emotion in an email or a text, and so it's very easy to misunderstand someone else. And while firing off an angry email gives you a chance to vent or get something off your chest, it does nothing for the other person.

III. Start With a _____ Meeting (Matthew 18:15)

Pay attention to the second part of Matthew 18:15: "just between the two of you." **IV. Ask For Help From Other Spirit-Filled Christians (Matthew 18:16-17)**

IV. Ask For _____ From Other _____ - _____ Christians (Matthew 18:16-17)

Conclusion

I am convinced that there are conflicts in our congregation that could be resolved if we were just willing to take these steps. Let's review them together: Quickly. **Face to face. One on one. Get help.** During our time of invitation, I'd like you to think through any relationships that have gone sideways in your life. Remember the priority Jesus put on resolution and reconciliation.