

## Lesson 15: Marriage – Conflict Resolution

### Introduction:

#### I. Root Causes of Conflict

A. \_\_\_\_\_ (Jas 4:1-3).

*James 4:1-3 – What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

B. Not intentionally \_\_\_\_\_ (Gal 5:16-17).

*Gal 5:16-17 – But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*

C. \_\_\_\_\_ (Jas 1:19-20).

*James 1:19-20 – Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*

D. Not \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor 13:4-8).

*1 Cor 13:4-8 – Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends...*

E. Communicating \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 4:29).

*Eph 4:29 – Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

F. Abandoning the \_\_\_\_\_ God has given us (see last two lectures).

G. Seeking only to be \_\_\_\_\_ and never to \_\_\_\_\_.

H. \_\_\_\_\_ expectations, and \_\_\_\_\_ expectations.

I. Judging \_\_\_\_\_ (Jer 17:9-10).

*Jer 17:9-10 – The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? “I the Lord search the heart and test the mind...”*

J. \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen. 3:12).

K. Lack of \_\_\_\_\_.

L. Fear of \_\_\_\_\_, not God (Matt 6:25-34).

M. Lack of \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ (Prov. 13:3).

Which of those do you think the Lord would want you to give the most attention to right now?

## II. Man’s Way to Resolve Conflict

### A. Such Promising Solutions...

1. Win at all costs!
2. Lose in order to win!
3. Compromise! (a win/win situation)
4. Avoid/bury it!
5. Set boundaries!
6. Fight clean!

### B. Such devastating results...

1. You end up keeping a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You become \_\_\_\_\_ to gossip and slander.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ becomes *so* enticing.
4. Mountains out of molehills.
5. Time, distance, and division increase.
6. You begin to think there is \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. God's Way to Resolve Conflict

#### A. Don't focus on yourself... \_\_\_\_\_ yourself (Luke 9:23-24).

1. Do not insist on your own way/desires.
2. Lay down your rights.
3. Prepare yourself now to be wronged.
4. Don't be led by your emotions.
5. Replace demands with requests.
6. See conflict as an opportunity for growth – *What is God trying to teach me in this moment?*

#### B. Look out for the \_\_\_\_\_ of your spouse (Phil 2:3,4).

1. This doesn't mean your concerns are worthless and should be ignored.
2. This does mean that you are to take the same level of concern you have for self and apply it to others.

#### C. Communicate \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph. 4:29).

1. Speak the truth in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Includes words (no silent treatment).
  - b. Doesn't include \_\_\_\_\_ words ("I just say it like it is").
  - c. Rules out lying, superlatives ("you never") or manipulative comments.
  - d. Spoken directly to the person (not through kids, not under your breath, etc.).
  - e. Excludes: blowing up, excessive crying, making threats, yelling, throwing, hitting, restricting/restraining.
2. Keep \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Stay on task (don't bring up multiple issues - deal with one at a time).
  - b. Resolve issues asap (Eph 4:27 – don't let the sun go down on your anger).
  - c. Once it's resolved, don't bring it up again.

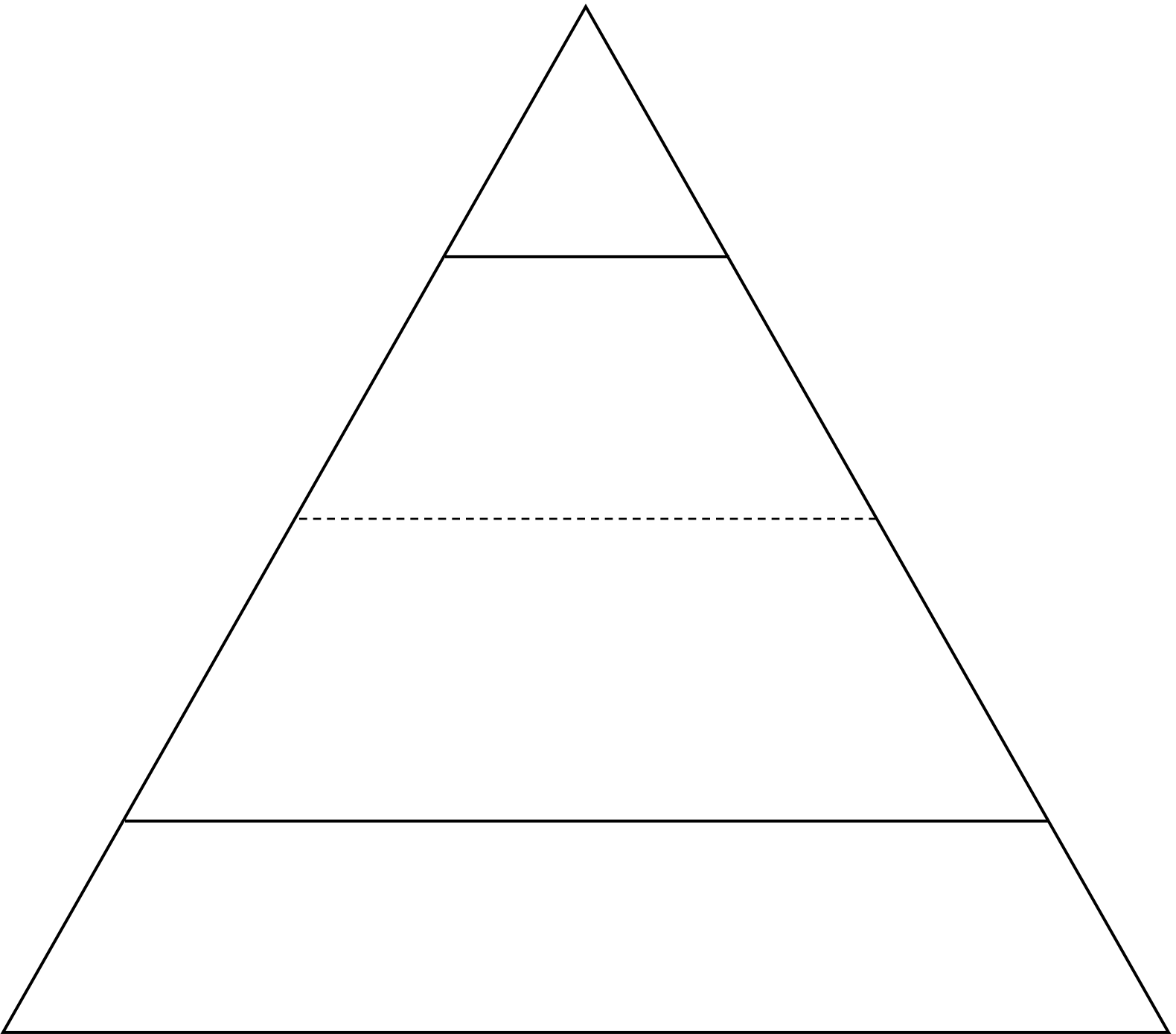
3. Attack the \_\_\_\_\_, not the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Use edifying words that build up...
    - ...Refuse to use unwholesome words that tear down.
  - b. Use words that are timely (Eph 4:29)...
    - ...Refuse to use words that cloud or bypass the issue.
  - c. Seek to find a resolution to the problem...
    - ...Refuse the urge to “make them feel the weight” of the problem.
  
4. Act, don't \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Put off all forms of anger and put on kindness, tenderness and forgiveness (Eph 4:31-32).
  - b. Slow down and be thoughtful about what you say before you say it.
    - i. Talk in sentences, not paragraphs or chapters.
    - ii. Be specific, not general.
    - iii. Make sure they're tracking with you.
  - c. Never assume the worst.
  - d. Don't judge motives.
  - e. Be gracious.

**D. Return \_\_\_\_\_ for evil (Rom. 12:17-21).**

**Conclusion:**

See Conference Table on pages 261 – 264

See Iceberg Diagram (last page)



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## 4 Steps to Resolving a Conflict

1. Before it begins:
  - a. Ready your own heart in prayer.
  - b. Be humble before you begin, admitting you are part of the problem.
  - c. Anticipate hearing something that will help you grow spiritually.
  - d. Remember, you cannot change the other person.
  
2. Listening
  - a. Focus on understanding the other person's perspective before forming your response.
  - b. Focus on what they are feeling and try to understand.
  - c. Focus on understanding the facts.
  - d. Appreciate what you're hearing and try and learn from it.
  
3. Responding
  - a. Make time to point out things you appreciate in the midst of the disagreement before expressing your reaction.
  - b. Focus on proper words, tone of voice, and body language in what you say.
  - c. Speak the truth, but speak it in love, or don't speak. Stop, go somewhere, and pray until there is love in your heart and you can speak the truth in love.
  
4. When it's over
  - a. What can you do to correct your part?
  - b. How should my behavior change according to biblical principles?
  - c. Write down specific repeatable and attainable ways you can better serve in the future.
  - d. Commit to solve the root issues permanently.