

Accelerated Success: Conflict
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THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT:

1. FOUR COMPLAINTS THAT CAME UP IN NEHEMIAH 5:1-5

1.1. There was a food shortage.

Nehemiah 5:2 (NIV) "Some were saying, "We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain."

1.2. Their homes were over mortgaged.

Nehemiah 5:3 (NIV) "Others were saying, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine."

1.3. The high taxes.

Nehemiah 5:4 (NIV) "Still others were saying, "We have had to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards."

1.4. Slavery.

Nehemiah 5:5 (NIV) "Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our fellow Jews and though our children are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others."

2. THE REAL PROBLEM THAT CAN BE SEEN IN NEHEMIAH 5:1-5

Nehemiah 5:1 (NIV) "Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their fellow Jews."

2.1. The people were exploiting each other.

2.2. The root cause of internal conflict and discord is always selfishness.

James 4:1 (NIV) "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?"

3. THE CURE FOR CONFLICT

3.1. Reaction: Get angry.

Nehemiah 5:6 (NIV) "When I heard their outcry and these charges, I was very angry."

Eph. 4:26 (KJV) "Be ye angry, and sin not."

3.2. Reflection: Think before you speak.

Nehemiah 5:7 (NIV) "I pondered them in my mind ..."

Nehemiah 5:7 (LB) "So after thinking about it, I spoke out against these rich government officials ..."

James 1:19-20" Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life God desires."

3.3. Rebuke: You privately confront the offending party.

Nehemiah 5:7 (NIV) "I then accused the nobles and officials. I told them `You are exacting usury from your own countrymen!'"

Matthew 18:15 (NIV) "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. "

Titus 3:10-11 "Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self condemned."

3.4. Resolution: Publicly deal with the public divisions.

Nehemiah 5:7 (NIV) "So I called together a large meeting to deal with them..."

3.5. Reinforcement: set an example of unselfishness.

1 Cor. 11:1 "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ."

Eph. 4:3 "MAKE EVERY EFFORT to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Sermon Discussion Guide

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OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

1. Do you generally avoid conflict? Why do you think most people try to side-step conflict?
2. What causes conflict in your life?
3. Does selfishness ever cloud your judgement in conflict situations?