

Conflict Begins Within the Heart

Conflict - a state of disagreement or disharmony between persons or ideas.

James 4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure [your own ways of pleasing yourself] that war in your members [within you]?

**The Gospel may be the CAUSE of Conflict
But it Always Carries the CURE of All Conflict**

1 Thes 2:2 But even after we had suffered before
and were spitefully treated at Philippi,
as you know, we were bold in our God to speak
to you **the gospel of God in much conflict.**

Paul Understood THE TRUE PURPOSE of the Law

Gal. 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; **for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**

Gal. 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to **Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

Seeing the Law through the lens of the Gospel.

Titus 3:9 But **avoid foolish disputes**, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless.

1 Tim. 6:4 he is **proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words**, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,

KEY PASSAGE:

2 Tim. 2:23-26 But **avoid foolish and ignorant disputes**, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel **but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition**, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Resolving the Dispute of ACTS 15

- **Come together in open discussion with a goal toward resolution (v.4,6)**
- **Establish what everyone already knows. (v.7)**
- **Start with the common ground of our mutual foundation of God's authority and truth. (v.7-8)**
- **Consider the relevant and related facts (v.8-11)**
- **Be slow to speak and listen carefully (v.12)**
- **Speak in order one at a time (v.13)**
- **Base unity on the authority of God's Word (v.15)**
- **Seek to resolve the matter peacefully (v.22)**

CONFLICT RESOLVE:

The KEY to a biblical 'conflict resolve' is to continually seek the glory of God and the well-being of others, even if it means dying to self, while maintaining an unwavering commitment to the truth demonstrated in Christ's unconditional, unfailing love.

Rom. 5:8 But God demonstrates **His own love toward us,** in that while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us.**

Conflict is actually an OPPORTUNITY to bring GLORY TO GOD

1 Cor. 10:24 Let no one seek his own, but each one
the other's well-being.

1 Cor. 10:31-33 Therefore, whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks
or to the church of God, just as I also please all men
in all things, **not seeking my own profit,
but the profit of many, that they may be saved.**

“Conflict always provides an opportunity to glorify God, that is, to bring him praise and honor by showing who he is, what he is like, and what he is doing. The best way to glorify God in the midst of conflict is to depend on and draw attention to his grace, that is, the undeserved love, mercy, forgiveness, strength, and wisdom he gives to us through Jesus Christ.”

— Ken Sande, “The Peacemaker”

Three basic ways people respond to conflict:

- **Escape Responses** (Peace-faking)
- **Peacemaking Responses** (Peace-making)
- **Attack Responses** (Peace-breaking)

**Taken from "The Peacemaker"
by Ken Sande**

Romans 15:5-6

“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, **that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord”**

A Biblical Pattern for Conflict Resolve:

Our PURPOSE: To glorify God in all we say and do

Our POSITION: Our honest concern, perspective or personal conviction on a particular matter.

Our PROBLEM: Our selfish will, preferences, and desires that get in the way as we seek to get our way

Our POSTURE: To humble ourselves before God and be teachable and open to others.

Our PROVISION: The cross of Christ, the Spirit of truth, and the ministry of reconciliation

Our PRACTICE: Christ's unconditional love and our obedience to His Word.

Our PURSUIT: To endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Romans 12:16-18

Be of the same mind toward one another.

Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil.

Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Get All the Facts BEFORE Drawing a Conclusion

Prov. 18:13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

Prov. 18:17 The first one to plead his cause seems right, Until his neighbor comes and examines him.

James 1:19-20

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

Some Practical Wisdom

Prov. 17:14 The beginning of strife is like releasing water; Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts.

Prov. 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Prov. 15:28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

The Harmony of the Church with the Spirit:

**v.28 - "For it seemed good to the HOLY SPIRIT,
and TO US"**

Acts 15:22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders,
with the whole church, to send chosen men of their
own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas

Acts 15:25 it seemed good to us, being assembled with
one accord, to send chosen men to you with our
beloved Barnabas and Paul...

Colossians 3:12-15

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Four Things the Gentiles were to ABSTAIN from:

- 1. Idolatrous Connections of Any Kind**
- 2. All forms of Sexual Immorality**
- 3. Things Strangled (animal/child sacrifice)**
- 4. Consuming Blood**

The MOTIVE of All Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

The MINISTRY of Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has **given us the ministry of reconciliation**, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."

THIS WEEK

ACTS IN ACTION

CHALLENGE POINT:

Identify any potential conflict and pray for discernment
Choose to listen, learn, and understand their position
Seek to reconcile through patient discussion and love