

Sunday, May 21, 2023
CONFLICT RESOLUTION
PART 1: REGARDING ACTIVITIES

For a couple of weeks, we'll be discussing conflict resolution in the body of Christ. We'll tackle this from two different areas:

1. Conflict over faith
2. Conflict over flow

Conflict over faith will focus on disagreements over how we live our lives – the activities we are involved in and the things we do. Conflict over flow will focus on disagreements over how things operate in the church. Today, we look at conflicts over faith.

Can you eat a piece of fruit that was offered to Buddha? Can you watch a certain movie or listen to certain music? Can we have an alcoholic beverage? Believe it or not, most of the answers to these questions are addressed in the Bible – either directly or in principle. Yet, because each of us are from different backgrounds and at different places in Christ, we often allow these types of things cause conflict and division among us.

[Romans 14:1-13 \(NKJV\)](#)

Notice we are not talking today about heresy which we all stand against nor are we speaking of rebellious sin but about disputes over things that don't seem to be directly addressed in the Word. There is an answer to any question you have in the Word either directly or in principle. But because some things are not addressed as "Thou shall not!" or because we are from different traditions, we disagree over disputable things. What are we to do?

Doubtful disputations. —The marginal rendering is more exact, "to judge his doubtful thoughts," or "to criticize his scruples." The strong are to deal tenderly with the weak, and not engage them in discussions regarding morality.

The Bible tells us that we are not to engage in an argument over these things. Why?

Arguments break fellowship and obstruct learning.

Here are a few things the Bible teaches us about disagreements of this type: *I am not to judge but to love*. If my brother/sister asks us about such things, we can share our biblical insights. But our focus is to be: *Assisting them to maintain their faith, not to violate it*.

Romans 14:14-23 (NKJV)

It is at this point that many fail. Many who believe that they have the “revelation” believe they are strong. When differing in opinion with those they believe are weak, they try to force change on the one they consider “weak” or simply go ahead and engage in behavior that their brother or sister considers a violation for them.

Forcing others into situations that violate their faith is a sin against Christ and reveals immaturity rather than strength.

Romans 15:1-2 (NKJV)

What is more important? A movie or your brother/sister? A beverage or your brother/sister? Music or your brother/sister? The same thing was shared in the book of 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 10:24-33 (NKJV)

As fellow believers, our focus is to love others as they walk with God - not forcing them into positions in which they are not comfortable nor trying to make them into something we are comfortable with but to trust God with their development and to focus on what we are responsible for – our own walk with God.

Today’s Scriptures:

- Romans 14:1-23 (NKJV)
- Romans 15:1-2 (NKJV)
- 1 Corinthians 10:24-33 (NKJV)