

# GOD'S PLAN FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

Select Passages • June 24, 2007 • Pastor Mike Newman

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## RELATIONSHIPS that WORK

**Psalm 133:1 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup>How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers live together in harmony!

**Philippians 2:2-3 (NLT)** <sup>2</sup>Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. <sup>3</sup>Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

**Proverbs 6:16-19 (NLT)** <sup>16</sup>There are six things the LORD hates— no, seven things he detests: <sup>17</sup>haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, <sup>18a</sup>a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, <sup>19a</sup>a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family.

**Romans 12:18 (NLT)** <sup>18</sup>Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

**Matthew 5:44 (NLT)** <sup>44</sup>But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!

**1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT)** <sup>17</sup>Never stop praying.

**Proverbs 12:15 (NLT)** <sup>15</sup>Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.

**Proverbs 18:13 (NLT)** <sup>13</sup>Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish.

**Proverbs 25:12 (NLT)** <sup>12</sup>To one who listens, valid criticism is like a gold earring or other gold jewelry.

**James 1:19 (NLT)** <sup>19</sup>Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

**Ephesians 4:26-27 (NLT)** <sup>26</sup>And “don't sin by letting anger control you.” Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup>for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

**Proverbs 15:1 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup>A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.

**Proverbs 16:28 (NLT)** <sup>28</sup>A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends.

**Proverbs 25:23 (NLT)** <sup>23</sup>As surely as a north wind brings rain, so a gossiping tongue causes anger!

### Four Biblical Principles:

1) Our goal should be to \_\_\_\_\_ with others and to limit the amount of conflict we have in our relationships.

See Psalm 133:1, Philippians 2:2-3, Proverbs 6:16-19, and Romans 12:18

2) Conflict and disagreement are a \_\_\_\_\_ of relationships.

***“To be human is to be in conflict—to offend and to be offended.”***

— John Howard Yoder

### Biblical Examples:

- Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-16)
- Abraham and Lot (Genesis 13)
- Moses, Miriam, and Aaron (Numbers 12)
- David and Saul (1 Samuel 19)
- Jesus' Disciples (Luke 9:46)
- Peter and Paul (Galatians 2:11-21)
- Paul/Barnabas with Church (Acts 15:1-35)
- Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41)

***Conflict and disagreement will be inevitable and it is simply a part of life even for followers of Christ. God is more concerned with how we deal with our disagreements and conflicts than He is that we have them.***



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**Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT)** <sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup>Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

**1 Peter 4:8 (NLT)** <sup>8</sup>Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

**Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT)** <sup>31</sup>Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. <sup>32</sup>Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

**Colossians 3:12 (NLT)** <sup>12</sup>Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

**Ephesians 4:15 (NLT)** <sup>15</sup>Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

**Ephesians 4:29 (NLT)** <sup>29</sup>Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

**Proverbs 27:17 (NLT)** <sup>17</sup>As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

**Matthew 18:15-19 (NLT)** <sup>15</sup>If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. <sup>16</sup>But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector. <sup>18</sup>"I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven. <sup>19</sup>"I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you.

**1 Corinthians 6:1-7 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup>When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers! <sup>2</sup>Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even these little things among yourselves? <sup>3</sup>Don't you realize that we will judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life. <sup>4</sup>If you have legal disputes about such matters, why go to outside judges who are not respected by the church? <sup>5</sup>I am saying this to shame you. Isn't there anyone in all the church who is wise enough to decide these issues? <sup>6</sup>But instead, one believer sues another—right in front of unbelievers! <sup>7</sup>Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated?

**3) God wants us to work toward resolving conflict \_\_\_\_\_ in the process and to do it in a way that honors Him.**

### General Principles in All Relationships:

- \_\_\_\_\_ for the other people involved and for yourself as you work through the conflict. (Matthew 5:44, 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- Be \_\_\_\_\_ to try to figure out what are the real issues. (Proverbs 12:15, 18:13, 25:12, and James 1:19)
- We need to deal with things with \_\_\_\_\_ over our emotions. (James 1:19, Ephesians 4:26-27, Proverbs 15:1)
- We need to make sure we \_\_\_\_\_ about the situation to others and we should try to keep the fewest people involved as possible. (Proverbs 16:28, Proverbs 25:23)
- We need to \_\_\_\_\_ for anything we have done to cause the problem and/or for any way that we have responded sinfully to the situation. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- We need to be full of \_\_\_\_\_ and quick to overlook other's failures and faults. (1 Peter 4:8, Ephesians 4:31-32, and Colossians 3:12)
- We need to speak the \_\_\_\_\_ . (Ephesians 4:15, Ephesians 4:29, and Proverbs 27:17)

### Two Additional Principles When The Issues are Between Two Christians:

- We should follow the process outlined in Matthew 18:15-19.
- We should do all we can to stay out of court with others who are followers of Christ. (1 Corinthians 6:1-7)

**4) If you are unable to agree and bring complete resolution to the disagreement or conflict, \_\_\_\_\_ with one another and believe that God will make good come from the situation.**

- See Acts 15:36-41 for an example
- See Romans 8:28 for God's promise.

