

Biblical Principles of Conflict Resolution

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I. THE CHRISTIAN HOME IS NOT A PROBLEM-FREE HOME.

A. Sinners live there.

1. The myth of compatibility---there are no two sinners who are perfectly compatible.

B. Whenever two people enter into a close relationship, disagreements are inevitable.

1. Familiarity breeds contempt.

C. Problems are not the issue, but how we react to them and whether or not we seek to solve them Biblically.

1. Problems are used by God to reveal areas of our lives that need to be changed in order to become like Jesus Christ in our thinking and behavior (Romans 8:28-29). Therefore, problems need not be feared.

2. People who respond to disagreements in a Biblical way will find that they are beneficial in stimulating spiritual growth and development.

II. NOWHERE IN SCRIPTURE DOES IT INDICATE THAT CONFLICT RESOLUTION COMES NATURALLY OR EASILY.

A. It is the tendency of our fallen flesh to be defensive about our own sin. (Matthew 7:2-5).

B. It is the tendency of fallen man to fight and devour. (Galatians 5:13-16).

1. The reason fights and quarrels occur is because we aren't getting our way or something we want. (James 4:1-2).

C. It is sometimes very difficult to come to agreement when conflict occurs. (Proverbs 18:19).

D. Though conflict resolution may be difficult, it is not impossible when we carefully follow God's directives.

III. GUIDELINES FOR BIBLICAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION.

A. Check your goal.

1. Is my goal to please God? Or is my goal to prove a point or get my way? (1 Thessalonians 4:1).
2. Am I willing to be God's kind of person no matter how the one I disagree with reacts?
3. Are there any hidden "idols" in my heart---things I am not willing to give up for the sake of obeying Christ? (James 1:14-16).
4. Examples of wrong goals:
 - a. Changing others.
 - b. Feeling better/getting rid of the pressure.
 - c. Changing my circumstances.

B. Check your attitudes. (Ephesians 4:30-32).

1. Wrong attitudes to put off:
 - a. Bitterness: *refusal to treat someone as if they had never hurt you.*
 - b. Rage: *flaring outbursts of anger.*
 - c. Anger: *settled indignation or hostility that frequently seeks revenge, the slow burn.*
 - d. Brawling: *harsh contention, strife, public arguing.*
 - e. Slander: *to speak evil of, abusive speech, speech that injures.*
 - f. Malice: *desire to see other people suffer.*
2. Right attitudes to put on:
 - a. Kind: *benevolent, helpful, courteous.*
 - b. Compassionate: *tenderhearted, sympathetic.*
 - c. Forgiving: *to pass over an offense and not require the punishment properly due.*
3. Am I a negative person? Do I tend to always major on others faults and what is wrong? (Philippians 4:8).

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C. Check your thinking.

1. What does God want ME to change? (Galatians 6:3-4; Titus 2:7-8).
2. What is the goal of your situation? What do you think God is trying to teach you? (James 1:3-4).
3. How do I find out the changes that God wants me to make? (Psalm 119:9,11,105).

D. Check your behavior.

1. Communicate Biblically. (Ephesians 4:15, 29).
2. Return good for evil. (Romans 12:17-21).

3. Submit to authority. (1 Peter 3:1).
4. Turn others over to God. (Romans 12:17-19).