

Relationships 101 Handling Conflict

Introduction

- We are all born with a need for connection, for relationship
- In differing ways and various degrees we have relationships with friends, family and foes (people we maybe at odds with)
- The quality of our relationships determines the quality of our lives
- Our relationships help direct the course of our lives
- Learning yourself and learning others is essential to growing and becoming
- We are transformed to reach our full potential through
 1. The Bible, 2. Prayer, 3. Community our relationships
- God uses relationships to give us courage
- It is our relationships that carry us through our difficult trials in life

- Everything God gets to us he does so through relationship
- Weakness in relationship leads to a diminished life
- Weakness in relationship makes you more susceptible to deception

A New Wardrobe

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offence. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way. **Colossians 3.12-17**

Story

- Story of early warrior Days (25 years ago) - The team on a weeks youth mission
- One of the team didn't come to team devotions, or too breakfast, or to the meeting
- I had an expectation that we as a team had agreed and now one of the team wanted to change the team dynamic
 - I felt at a loss,
 - I felt angry,
 - I felt out of control,
 - I didn't want the issue to exist, i wished it would go away

Conflict Comes

- Conflict comes in every relationship
- Conflict is like an iceberg - What we see above the surface is normally only a small part of a bigger issue
- It could be between a husband and wife
- Or parents and children
- Work colleagues
- Siblings can experience conflict
- It can be between Church family
- In fact every relationship has the potential for conflict

Conflict Defined

Conflict is serious disagreement and argument about something important. If two people or groups are in conflict, they have had a serious disagreement or argument and have not yet reached agreement.

Reaction to Conflict

Our upbringing, family of origin early experiences shape the way we handle conflict

- *Fight* - Aggressive with our words or even perhaps physically
- *Flight* - 'I can't do this and didn't sign up for this' so we isolate
- *Freeze* - Fear of confrontation can lead some to try and ignore the problem. It can paralyse. It didn't really happen it isn't happening, I am hoping it goes away.

Conflict is an opportunity

- Instead of Fight, Flight or Freeze is there an another option?
- I believe there is. Could we see the Conflict as an opportunity? An Opportunity too:
 - Learn about yourself
 - Learn about the other
 - Get to the real issue - What is this conflict really about
 - Deepen a relationship

Application

1. See the opportunity

"If a fellow believer hurts you, go and tell him---work it out between the two of you. If he listens, you've made a friend. If he won't listen, take one or two others along so that the presence of witnesses will keep things honest, and try again. If he still won't listen, tell the church. If he won't listen to the church, you'll have to start over from scratch, confront him with the need for repentance, and offer again God's forgiving love. **Matthew 18:15-17 MSG**

- Don't step away - isolate
- Don't enter a fight
- Instead enter the Zone

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. **2 Corinthians 4:7**

Whoever would foster love covers over an offence, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends. **Proverbs 17:9**

2. Be vulnerable

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. **1 John 1:7**

- Let your self be seen, what your feeling,
- Stop blaming, Stop accusing, Open up your life,
- Be honest about fears,
- Share your hopes
- Vulnerability invited vulnerability

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. **James 5:16**

Smart people know how to hold their tongue; their grandeur is to forgive and forget. **Proverbs 19:11 MSG**

3. Communicate - Speak truth in love

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. [16] From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. **Ephesians 4:15-16**

- Speak Truth but speak truth in love
- We will then grow up into maturity and into Christ

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, **James 1.19**

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. **Romans 12:10**

Conclusion - Your New Wardrobe

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offence. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ—the Message—have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Instruct and direct one another using good common sense. And sing, sing your hearts out to God! Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way. **Colossians 3.12-17**