



RESOLVING CONFLICT



Practical Solutions to Real Peace & Harmony

The Right Heart

Psalm 73:21-22; Matthew 7:3-5;

Colossians 1:19-20; Ezekiel 36:25-27

Message from Pastor Martin Hawley

July 29, 2018

Bottom Line: The first step in any conflict is to thoroughly examine your heart.

Review:

Week 1 – The Right Priority

Don't gunnysack a relationship. Reconcile quickly. Overlook or reconcile.

Week 2 – The Right Focus

When you look in a mirror during a conflict, what do you see? God wants you to reflect His image, His glory, His grace, His gentleness, His compassion, His forgiveness, and His justice in every conflict.

Today, I want to talk about having the right heart in every conflict.

Be honest. When someone hurts or offends you, what is your natural inclination? Isn't it to blame others and focus on their wrongs?

This reaction began in the Garden of Eden and worked it's way throughout history. It begins in childhood, i.e. "He took my toy!", "She hit me first!" "He did it, too!"

What does our heart usually look like in conflict? Protecting myself. Protecting my reputation. Protecting my self-interests. This means I need to blame someone else.

The problem is the **blame game** always makes conflict worse. Blaming others causes you to look for and exaggerate others' wrongs while ignoring their virtues (good qualities).

This critical spirit and perspective always aggravates resentment, judgmental attitudes, and anger.

*“When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.”
-- Psalm 73:21-22*

You can change the course of a conflict by first examining your heart.

Matthew 7:3-5, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

Instead of indulging your habit of putting the emphasis on others’ wrongs and sticking them in the eye with your sharp accusations, Jesus teaches the shortest route to peace and reconciliation is to take a careful look at your heart (magnifying glass). Then, you can identify and confess the “planks” in your own eye.

Confessing wrongs and behavior usually changes the course of conflict.

If you want lasting change, you must go a step further than just confessing sinful behavior. You must also **repent**.

No matter how much you hate your pride, self-righteousness, envy, jealousy, and unforgiveness, you cannot sweep these things from your heart through your own effort. But, God can! God sent his own precious Son to the cross to pay the full penalty for the many sins you’ve committed.

Colossians 1:19-20, “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (Jesus), and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”

Ezekiel 36:25-27, “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you

will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

God often uses conflict to move you along in this transformation process.

NEXT STEPS:

- Memorize: Matthew 7:3-5**
- Pray that God Will Help You Not Rush to Judgement.**
- Examine Yourself First.**
- Confess Wrong Attitudes and Actions.**
- Repent of Your Wrong Thinking and Actions.**