

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

A significant part of our sanctification process involves learning to deal with conflict in a Godly way.

Sooner or later we deal with conflict in all of our relationships:

- in the home
- in the school setting
- in the workplace
- in the church

Wherever I go my inner conflict follows me and easily spills over to mix with others' contribution of their own conflict to create a toxic environment.

I am learning, through much failure, the importance of dealing with conflict God's way.

God's plan for dealing with conflict looks very different than our carnally motivated first response.

Conflict arises any time that my expectations are not met or my goals are blocked by someone. I am hurt by that person.

The Bible clearly tells us how we are to face this relational conflict.

Colossians 3:12-13

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

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-remember who you are. You are chosen by God.

-You are chosen to.....

-you are set apart from.....and to

-you are deeply loved

to share that love

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-Put on. It doesn't say pretend or try hard to look.....

-lack of a compassionate heart is at least as big a sin as the one committed against us

-when I lose love for the one who has wronged me I too am in the wrong.

-easy to deceive myself at this point

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- Lack of kindness in conflict is never justified.
- Everything that needs to be said must be said in kindness.
- Being right is not enough.

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, **humility**, meekness, and patience, **13** bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

-Humility doesn't allow me to elevate myself above another.

-I am not their judge.

-I am no better than the person with whom I am at odds.

-Humility allows me to consider honestly how **I am** increasing the conflict.

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-Meekness is strength under control.

-Even when we are 100% right meekness doesn't gloat.

-Meekness makes it as easy as possible for the offender to admit they are wrong.

-Meekness leads as a servant not as a dictator.

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-Change, understanding, growth and harmony all take time and effort.

-Patience allows God to work and keeps me from trying to do His work while I wait.

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-It is not always easy to get along with others.

-It can't always be about me, my way, my timing, my preference.....

-We all have major weaknesses and faults.

-How we treat each other when we are in conflict shows how much we truly love each other.

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-Not just “sin” that we need to forgive but every complaint.

-Whenever I feel wronged I attribute a “debt” to that person’s account.

-It becomes a debt that is impossible to pay back.

-We owe each other constant love so failure can never be repaid, it can only be forgiven.

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-When I forgive I am like Christ, when I don't I am like "the accuser of the brethren".

-Do you see why "you also **must** forgive"?

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-The Lord didn't pretend he wasn't bothered by our sin.

-He didn't justify our sin or minimize it in any way.

-He doesn't expect us to make up for our sin by doing better in the future.

-He paid the full price for MY wrongdoing and completely erased my debt and treated me as though it never happened.

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-We are never more like Christ than when we forgive. He expects us to be like him.

-Refusing to forgive elevates us to the role of judge.

-We usurp that position because it was never given to us.

-This is pride.

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-God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

-When I do not forgive I put myself against God as well as against the person I refuse to forgive.

-I am choosing the law instead of grace for the other person.

-Choosing it for them I choose it for myself as well.

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-I have been given access to a throne of grace not a throne that judges me by my ability to keep the letter of the law.

-The Lord said that the way I judge others will be applied to me as well.

-The Lord said if I do not forgive I will not be forgiven.

so you also **must** forgive. How?

- ask the Holy Spirit to show you who you need to forgive
- acknowledge the debt/sin/disappointment
- by forgiving you are accepting the loss; grieve the loss
- verbally express all the ways the person has failed you/sinned against you (don't justify their actions) then verbally express forgiveness
- I forgive _____ for _____

True reconciliation is only possible AFTER forgiveness.