

Sermon Notes on Churched: We Resolve Conflict (Philippians 4:1-3 & other references)

- Ever since the fall into sin by Adam and Eve, conflict has been a constant in life (part of the curse of sin – Gen. 3:14-16) and though believers are reconciled to God and each other through the death of Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:11-18), conflict still happens in the church.
- Paul calls two ladies struggling with conflict in the Philippians church (“*Euodia and Syntyche*”) to “*live in harmony in the Lord*” (Phil. 4:1) and invites “*Syzygus*” (Greek word for “true companion in v. 3 which may be the name of a person Paul is requesting help from) to “*help these women*” overcome their conflict.
- Living in harmony demands a proactive commitment from all disciples of Christ because we are in the one family of God, called to reciprocal living (“*one-another’s*”) and we’ve been equipped to resolve our conflicts.
- The church is wired to exercise and activate God’s P.E.A.C.E. plan. There are 5 relationship-restoring actions all believers should be ready to activate:

Put on humility before you react

- **Five Humility Developers:**
 1. Remember God’s call to be humble (Col. 3:12; Phil. 2:3-4; 1 Pet. 5:5; Jms 4:6)
 2. Remember your fleshly “*pleasures that wage war in your members*” (James 4:1-3). God reveals the main problem begins in each of our own hearts
 3. Remember how you received your salvation (Phil. 2:7-8). Jesus humbled Himself by giving His life on the cross for our sins.
 4. Remember your mutual responsibility to “*diligently preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (Eph. 4:3) and to “*pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another*” (Rom. 14:18)
 5. Remember your greatest aim is to not live for yourself, but for God and His glory (2 Cor. 5:15)

Extract your own sin logs (Matt. 7:3-5)

- Jesus condemns **sinful judgments** that are based upon faulty assumptions (we know all the facts; our judgments are always accurate; we think God won't notice and respond) and foolish attitudes and actions (hypocrisy; harshness; jealousy; superiority)
- Jesus commends **selective judgments** that wisely assess and address sinful situations:
 1. Judge sinning believers (1 Cor. 5:12)
 2. Judge cultural sins like John the Baptist did with Herod Jesus told us would happen when we call out evil in society (John 7:7).
 3. Judge false teachers (Titus 1:9-11)
 4. Judge gospel "hogs" and "dogs" who lose the right to interact about the "holy and priceless "pearl" we know as the gospel (Matt 7:6)
 5. **Judge yourself first** (Matt. 7:3-5): Address the "log"-like sins in your life before you attempt to address the "speck"-like sins in others.

Address the offense

- **If the offense is against you:**
 - Be willing to overlook minor offenses (Prov. 19:11) and tolerate others (Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:2; 1 Cor. 13:5)
 - Pray for the offenders heart to be receptive to your loving pursuit of restoration.
 - Look for character qualities God may want to teach you through this conflict (Gal. 5:22-23)
 - Address the offense privately with your brother or sister (Matt. 18:15)
 - Be honest, yet gracious and gentle when addressing your offense (Prov. 27:5; 12:18; 16:24; Gal. 6:1)
 - Guard yourself from gossip, backbiting and slander (Eph. 4:29-32)
 - Believe the best about your offender unless the facts prove otherwise (1 Cor. 13:7)
 - Grant full forgiveness to your brother or sister (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13)

- **If you've committed the offense:**
 - Ask the Lord to humble your heart and give you wisdom as you seek to restore the relationship.
 - Don't delay in pursuing restoration (Matt. 5:23-24)
 - Confess your sin to God and ask forgiveness from your brother or sister (Prov. 28:13; Eph. 4:32)
 - Resist any prideful defensiveness if your offended brother or sister displays frustration or disappointment in how your offense hurt them.

Control your tongue

- **Purge communication that's relationally destructive:** Watch your amount (Prov. 10:19), tone (Prov. 15:1) and content (Eph. 4:29, 31; Prov. 17:9)
- **Pursue communication that's relationally constructive:** Look for ways to "give a blessing" (1 Pet. 3:9), for ways to "speak the truth in love" (watch your approach-Eph. 4:15, 29; Prov. 15:23) and your tone (Prov. 15:1; Prov. 12:25)

Emulate Jesus Christ

- Every relational conflict is an opportunity to learn more of Christ (Euodia and Syntyche were called to "*live in harmony **in the Lord***" and the Lord's came to live and die for a peacemaking mission-Eph. 2:14, 16; Rom. 5:1)
- Observe how Jesus was regularly offended, yet He showed kindness, patience, grace, love and forgiveness to others (Jesus tells a parable that demonstrates how much more He forgave of our unpayable debt compared to how little we must forgive others for their comparably tiny debt – Matt. 18:21-35)
- Real peace is found with God and others in a growing relationship with Christ who is "*the Lord of peace*" (2 Thess. 3:16) who provides all the peace we need (John 14:27; 16:33; 2 Cor. 5:19)