

John 13:34 says “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

**Our ultimate goal should be restoration of the relationship.**

Pray this week that God will give you the courage and ability to walk through conflict in the ways presented in His Word.

If you are in conflict with another person, think and pray about your next steps toward reconciliation and restoration.

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#### Tips for Managing Conflict

- Make the relationship your priority. Maintaining and strengthening the relationship, rather than "winning" the argument, should always be your first priority.
- Focus on the present. If you're holding on to old hurts and resentments, your ability to see the reality of the current situation will be impaired.
- Pick your battles. Conflicts can be draining, so it's important to consider whether the issue is really worthy of your time and energy.
- Be willing to forgive. Resolving conflict is impossible if you're unwilling or unable to forgive.
- Know when to let something go. If you can't come to an agreement, agree to disagree. It takes two people to keep an argument going. If a conflict is going nowhere, you can choose to disengage and move on.

<http://www.edcc.edu/counseling/documents/conflict.pdf>

November 5, 2017

## **Relationships 101**

*Conflict 101*

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James 4:1-6

### **Define the Problem**

Pr 15:14

### **Initiate a Time to Talk**

Matt 5:23-24

### **Focus on the Perceived Problem**

Pr 18:19

### **Feel Their Pain**

1Pe 3:8

### **Uncover the Root**

Pr 20:5

### **Set Things Right**

Jas 5:16

### **Establish an Action Plan**

James 1:22-25

Conflict can cause anger, hurt, confusion, fear, and damaged relationships. At the same time, if approached in a God-honoring way, conflict can bring stimulation, healing, resolution to problems, and building of relationships. It can prevent stagnation and bring needed change in ministry or our everyday life. Conflict can't be completely avoided, but it can be managed and resolved. It can help us grow in our skills and relationships.

Think of a time when you had conflict. How did it materialize and how did it end up? How did you feel about going through the conflict and how do you feel now that you are on the other side?

Read James 4: 1- 6

In what ways do you see James as being "spot on" when it comes to human nature?

How do you see pride and humility playing parts in the area of relational conflict?

When it comes to conflict, where should we first begin to look for the answer to the problem? ( us or the other person(s)?)

Read Matthew 5:23 - 26

How important are healthy relationships to Jesus? Explain.

What are the steps that you see from this passage that will help us deal with conflict appropriately?

Why might it be difficult to take these steps?

In dealing with problems, have you ever found yourself focusing on the person and not the problem? If you are comfortable, share a time where you have experienced this. How did you keep the problem in perspective?

Matthew 7:1-5 gives us a wake up call about where issues may lie when it comes to conflict. Is the problem more yours than the other person's?

What is our first reaction? Do we blame others and use the; you always, you never, you should statements? Have we prayerfully sought God's perspective about our role in the conflict and why we feel as we do about the situation?

When it comes to conflict, we typically begin by judging another.

Why do you think that's our default setting?

What might happen in our relationships if we would make "looking in the mirror" the first order of business?

"How do you handle a conflict? Do you run to your best friend and hash the situation out over coffee? Do you post a status on Facebook indirectly or directly bashing the person with whom you are in conflict? Read Matthew 18:15-20.

When attempting restoration, who all should be involved in the process?

What happens when we talk to people not-related to the conflict? When there's conflict between Person A and Person B, A talks to Person C (usually in a complaining, criticizing kind of way) instead of dealing directly with B, that's called triangulation. In what ways could this present a problem? How does this go against Jesus's Word?

In light of this passage, how will you change the way you handle conflict?

Look at Ephesians 4:3 and Colossians 3:13-14

How can we live out these scriptures with the people we care about the most?

What are some things that need to take place in us in order to make this a practice?