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RESOLVING CONFLICT HOME IMPROVEMENT

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Part 2 of 8
Mark 3:25

“A home filled with strife and division destroys itself.” Mark 3:25

Conflict can kill a marriage or any relationship.

THREE STEPS TO RESOLVING CONFLICT

1. THE REASON FOR CONFLICT

“Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that war within you.” James 4:1 (NCV)

Competing desires: I want what I want and you want what you want.

Conflict is inevitable - not just because we're selfish, but also because we're different.

2. HOW WE RESPOND TO CONFLICT

“Search me, Oh God, and know my heart and test my thoughts.” Ps 139:23 (TLB)

FIVE RESPONSES TO CONFLICT THAT COME FROM SELFISH DESIRES

- My way – I'm going to do whatever it takes, whatever battle I have to go through, to make sure I get what I want.
- No way – When conflict comes into your life, you just start to back off. Your rule is to avoid conflict at all costs.
- Your way – “Have it your way.” This approach causes bitterness.
- Half way – “OK, you've got an idea; I've got an idea; let's compromise.
- Our way – We recognize that I have needs and you have needs and there is a way for us to talk together so that our needs can be met in ways they never could have been met before.

3. HOW DO YOU RESOLVE CONFLICTS?

Standard approaches:

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- War zone – a fight to the finish.
- Actors on a stage – playing the same parts again and again.
- Courtroom – stating your points, it's all real controlled.

1. BECOME A BELIEVER

“As parts of the same body, our anger against each other has disappeared, for both of us have been reconciled to God. And so the feud ended at last at the cross.” Ephesians 2:16 (TLB)

THE FEUD ENDED AT THE CROSS!

Finding the love of Jesus Christ helps to find the forgiveness that I need and the strength to forgive others.

Dietrich Bonhoffer: “Live together in forgiveness for without it no human relationship, least of all a marriage, can survive. Accept each other as you are and forgive each other every day from the bottom of your hearts.”

2. TALK TO GOD ABOUT THE CONFLICT

Before you talk to the other person about it – talk to God about it.

“If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask Him, and He will gladly tell you.” James 1:5 (TLB)

Oftentimes, we expect other people to meet needs in our lives that only God can meet.

Ruth Graham: “I pity the married couple who expect too much from one another. It's foolish to expect from one another that which Jesus Christ can be – always ready to forgive, totally understanding, unendingly patient, invariably tender and loving, unfailing in every area, anticipating every need, making more than adequate provision. Such expectations put a marriage under an impossible strain.”

TWO MYTHS ABOUT MARRIAGE:

- “If I could just get married, all of my needs would be met.”
- If I had just married the right person all of my needs would have been met.”

The reason we need Jesus Christ is we can't meet all of one another's needs.

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The warning light is anger!

3. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS

Change your focus from my needs to their needs.

“Don’t be selfish ... don’t just think about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and in what they are doing. Your attitude should be the kind that was shown us by Jesus Christ.” Phil. 2:3-5 (TLB)

“Why do you notice the little piece of dust in your friend’s eye, but you don’t notice the big piece of wood in your own eye? First take the wood out of your own eye. Then you will see clearly to take the dust out of your friend’s eye.” Matt. 7:3,5 (NCV)

Our blind spots keep us from seeing their needs.

SIXTEEN POWERFUL PEACEMAKERS: “I’m sorry... I was only thinking of myself ... Help me to see things as you do.”

4. ESTABLISH GROUND RULES.

There are certain things in communication that are out of bounds. They destroy both sides.

“Stop being mean, bad-tempered, and angry. Quarreling, harsh words, and dislike of others should have no place in your lives.” Eph 4:31 (TLB)

Instead of being mean – be kind.

Instead of being bad-tempered – be patient.

Instead of anger – be honest and love.

Instead of harsh words – use gentle words.

HONESTY MEANS:

- When you are wrong you admit it.

Ogden Nash: “To keep your marriage brimming in the loving cup, when you’re wrong admit it, and when you’re right, shut up.”

- Never say “never” or “always” in the middle of a conflict
- Say what you mean
- Kindness – attack the problem and not the person.

Old proverb: “When you throw mud you lose ground.”

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5. GO AND MAKE PEACE.

“So when you offer your gift to God at the altar and you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go and make peace with that person and then come and offer your gift.”
Matt 5:23-24 (NCV)

Conflict is not resolved accidentally; it has to be deliberately dealt with.

- Choose the right time – ASAP
- Choose the right place – when you can focus on it.

6. ASK FOR ADVICE

“Pride leads to arguments, be humble, take advice, and become wise.” Prov 13:10 (TLB)

Areas we face problems in and we are not afraid to get help in:

If we are sick physically – we go to a doctor

If we have financial problems – we go to an accountant or CPA

If we have legal problems – we go to a lawyer

IF YOU HAVE RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS – GO TO A CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR!

It is more rewarding to resolve a conflict than to dissolve a relationship.

Don't walk out – Reach out for help

Don't give up – look up to God for help.

THREE AREAS YOU NEED TO COMMIT

1. I resolve to commit my life to Jesus Christ.
2. I resolve to commit my attitudes to Jesus Christ.
3. I resolve to commit my words to Jesus Christ.