

Biblical Conflict Resolution, Part 5 I make time for conflict

I. Biblical Observations Concerning Time

- God exists outside of time.
- God ordained that humans would exist in time.
- God expects us to redeem the time we have

II. Don't Run from Potential Conflict.

- When Conflict is Your Fault

- Matthew 5:23-24
- It's more important to God that you resolve conflict than it is that you go through important religious observances.
- The phrase "your brother has something against you" is purposefully broad.
- The reasons people avoid confessing and asking for forgiveness.
 - *Ignorance*: Ignorant people don't know they're wrong.
 - *Pride*: Prideful people can't believe they're wrong.
 - *Arrogance*: Arrogant people won't admit they're wrong even if they recognize they were.
- God said, if you "*remember that your brother has something against you*" go and be reconciled. That's the impetus into which God says we need to lean. We need to be humble enough to recognize that we far too often don't know when we're wrong but also that we could very likely be wrong, and if there's a relationship that needs reconciling, there's nothing more important we could be doing than taking the necessary steps to reconcile it.
- We must put what we think and believe and feel aside in order to pursue biblical reconciliation with our brothers and sisters. And this is so important that God wants us to prioritize it over our relationship with Him. I know how strange that sounds, and that's probably because it's only half of the truth. We prioritize God when we prioritize our horizontal reconciliation.

- When Conflict is Not Your Fault

- Luke 17:3; Matthew 18:15
- We're to go to the individual who sinned, rebuke him by using the Scriptures to help him see how his actions displeased the Lord, and call him to repentance with the goal of granting forgiveness and being reconciled.
- This is not about punishment. This isn't about proving to them that we were right. This is about winning your brother or sister. It's about repenting and forgiving and being reconciled.
- If both parties are pursuing biblical resolution to their conflict, whether they sinned in the disagreement or not, they should be moving toward the other person. One may have sinned and the other didn't, they both may have sinned, it doesn't matter, there are clear biblical commands that they both need to make time to address the conflict.

III. Conclusion

- Don't run from conflict.
 - Don't run away from the conflict without reconciling in a Christ-honoring way.
 - If you did run from conflict without reconciling, don't avoid reconciling because you're afraid more conflict may arise.

- The Matthew 18 passage talks about what we're to do if the person who sinned refuses to acknowledge it. We're just supposed to keep going back. We don't have the right to avoid trying to reconcile simply because we're afraid they're just going to cause more conflict.
- Introspective Questions for when you have sinned:
 - **Is there a particular person/people to whom you avoid confessing and asking forgiveness?**
 - **If you do avoid confessing and asking for forgiveness from these people, why?**
 - Most likely, it's an issue of pride and potentially arrogance.
 - Yes, it may be ignorance. Perhaps your father woefully taught you that a man doesn't owe his family an apology. Maybe you've bought the feminist lie that women can do no wrong.
 - That's possible, but—most likely—you're stubbornly refusing to even consider the fact that you may have done something wrong, even when the other person is acting like or saying that you did.
- Introspective Questions for when others have sinned against you:
 - **Do you avoid confronting people when they sin?**
 - It's quite possible that there are some people you have no issue confronting, but there are others you do.
 - **Is there are particular person or category of people you avoid confronting when they sin?**
 - **If you do avoid confronting people who have sinned against you, why?**
 - It's quite possible you are believing a lie that it's not appropriate for you to confront someone about sin. We fall into this trap when the sinner is an authority of ours. The Bible expects that we confront our authority when they need it, but it also expects us to do it in the right way.
 - But most likely we don't confront people because of fear. We even do this with kids. Fearful Parenting is a real problem where we don't teach and reprove our kids because we're afraid of the fallout we're going to endure.
 - But fear is pride. Fear says that my own perceived well-being is more important than obeying God.