

CHURCH: Conflict and Reconciliation

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Colossians 3:12-14 & Matthew 18:15-17

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Reflection & Discussion

Conflict is a part of life

Our goal isn't to avoid conflict, it's to handle it in a way that honors Jesus.

*What is your typical approach to handling conflict?

*What instances of conflict or reconciliation can you remember from the Bible?

When we disagree, we need to remember who we are in God

Read and discuss Colossians 3:12-14 (Message)

12-14 So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.

*What do these verses say about who we are in Christ? How would remembering these things impact conflicts we might be involved in?

*Can you tell about a time that you or someone you were in conflict with handled it with these characteristics? What about when it wasn't handled with love?

Forgiveness and reconciliation do not mean giving someone permission to keep hurting us

We don't have to stay in situations where we are being abused or repeatedly harmed.

*What kind of boundaries should be in place as we look to forgive or reconcile?

Jesus provided practical steps for how to handle conflict

Read and discuss Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)

15 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

*What steps can you identify from this passage?

*How is working through conflict both practical and spiritual?

Conflict doesn't have to be the end of the story – or relationship

God can use conflict in many ways.

*How have you seen God work in you regarding a conflict?

*What is the Spirit saying to you about forgiveness and reconciliation?

*Who might be a person you could take a step towards to reconcile conflict? Is there someone you need to reconcile with or encourage peace in a tense situation?

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