

Matthew 18:15-20

Conflict Resolution

December 29, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Intro

Prov. 12:16 - Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult.

Prov. 19:11 - A man's wisdom gives him patience; it's to his glory to overlook an offense.

Step 1 - Take the initiative to resolve the conflict.

Matthew 5:23-24 - "If you're offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."

v.15 - "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone."

- **One - The problem will never get solved if I don't talk to the person involved**
- **Two - I've involved another person in the problem**
- **Three - It's direct disobedience to what God says**
- **God says: "Go to the other person alone."**

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#1 - Pray beforehand

#2 - Go with the right attitude

Gal. 6:1 - If someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him *gently*. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

#3 - Start soon

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#4 - Meet face-to-face

David Swink wrote in Psychology Today: Email and texts have become the default mode of communication for many people. It's quick and efficient... [But] it eliminates the most valuable information of any conversation. In face-to-face communication, we rely heavily on non-verbal information like facial expression, body posture, gestures, and voice tone... Without these important non-verbal cues, our imaginations fill in the blanks of what the person sending the message intended and... we rarely fill in the blanks with positive intentions. This can lead to misunderstandings, damaged relationships, and poor decisions.

#5 - Affirm the relationship

You could start out by saying something like: *"I want to discuss something with you that might be difficult for both of us. But you're important to me. And I value our friendship. I don't want our relationship to be strained."*

#6 - Listen

Prov. 18:13 - He who answers before he hears is foolish and brought to shame.

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#7 - Apologize and ask forgiveness if you've wronged them.

#8 - Promote resolution

v.15 - "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, *you've gained your brother.*"

Step 2 - If you're unable to resolve the conflict, seek a mediator.

v.16 - "If he won't hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'"

Phil. 4:2-3 - I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, because you belong to the Lord, settle your disagreement. And I ask you, my true companion, help these women.

Phil. 4:5 - Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

Matthew 7 - "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but don't consider the plank in your eye?... First remove the plank from your own eye, and *then* you'll see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

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Phil. 4:6 - In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Phil. 4:8 - Finally, brothers and sisters, fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

v.17 - "And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church."

1 Cor. 5 - It's actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that even pagans don't tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. And you're proud! Shouldn't you rather have gone into mourning and have *put out of your fellowship* the man who has been doing this?... Your boasting isn't good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Therefore, purge out the old yeast.

2 Cor. 2:6-7 - The punishment imposed on him by the majority is sufficient. Now, however, it is time to forgive and comfort him.

v.18 - "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

v.19 - "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it'll be done for them by My Father in heaven.

v.20 - "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I'm there in the midst of them."