

Reading: Acts 15:36-40

Topic: Handling Conflicts

INTRODUCTION: Since the fall of the human race into _____, the problem of conflict has been ever present in this world and no one escapes dealing with it at some _____ or another.

I. CONFLICTS IN THE SCRIPTURE:

A. Old Testament:

1. The first major conflict that is recorded in the Word of God occurred in the first _____ and it happened between two brothers after a worship _____.
2. This conflict escalated into a _____ confrontation that left one of the brothers _____, and the other being banished and cursed for the rest of his life. Gen. 4:8
3. The only comfort for the parents in this terrible situation was the _____ of another son who turned out to be a righteous, God-fearing _____ who influenced others in a godly way. Gen. 4:25,26

B. New Testament:

1. The New Testament records the instances of _____ between the disciples of Jesus Christ as they fought for _____ in the new Kingdom of Christ. Mk. 9:33,34
2. This display of carnality and _____ revealed itself on more than one occasion during the ministry of Jesus as He was training and preparing them for their _____ mission in spreading the Gospel.
3. Even after the disciples were born again and _____ with the Holy Ghost, it did not end all of the conflicts between _____, as we just read in the Book of Acts about Paul and Barnabas. Acts 15:36-40
4. In another instance, there arose a _____ between two spiritual leaders of the Early Church – Peter and the Apostle Paul as they were in conflict over dealing _____ the salvation of Gentiles. Gal. 2:11-14

II. CONFLICTS ARE INEVITABLE:

A. Jesus Taught It:

1. Jesus taught about conflicts in His ministry, even in His very first _____ known as the Sermon on the Mount, as He laid out ways to live in _____ with others rather than fighting. Mt. 5:9
2. Jesus taught that _____ is inevitable, that it is going to happen, but that also there are proper ways to _____ with it so as to avoid escalation into more serious problems. Mt. 18:15

B. Life Reveals It:

1. When you are born into a family, you are loved and _____ for, but there are times when conflicts arise even with those that you are the _____ to, causing friction and trouble.
2. There are conflicts between husbands and wives, between parents and _____, between siblings, and usually over everyday life _____ like the bathroom, clothes, food, etc.
3. In most families, especially if the family is serving _____, love rises to the top and brings forgiveness and _____ to the situation, thus resolving the conflict. Pr. 10:12
4. When conflicts are between _____, because the two people involved are born again and serving Jesus, it should be easier to resolve the situation through _____ and forgiveness.

III. STEPS TO RESOLVING CONFLICTS:

A. Find The Real Source Of The Conflict:

1. Sometimes conflicts arise between people and it's not even _____ to either person how or what happened to start the problem.
2. Before any conflict can be resolved, the people involved must find out _____ the conflict is about, and then once that is discovered, proper _____ can be taken to resolve it.
3. Sometimes the conflict may not be anything more than a misunderstanding about something that someone _____ or _____, and once that is clarified, the issue is settled.

B. Choose The Right Time:

1. There needs to be the right _____ to meet and resolve a conflict, and that time should not be when one is angry and emotions are running _____.
2. It is better to wait until the emotions have cooled down and people are _____ clearly, and then the individuals involved can prepare to _____ to resolve the issue between them.
3. If the people involved in the conflict are Christians, they should definitely _____ before going to a meeting to find the _____ to the conflict.

C. Choose The Right Place:

1. Personal conflict should not be dealt with in _____, thus it is better to have the two individuals meet and talk with each other _____, away from the prying eyes and ears of other people. Mt. 18:15
2. It is best to choose some neutral location in a _____ place rather than the home of one of the Individuals – perhaps a coffee shop or a private room in the _____.

D. Prepare To Listen:

1. Even if you feel that you are the one who is _____ and the other person is _____, you need to approach the meeting prepared to _____ to the other person's point of view. James 1:19
2. Once one hears the heart of the other individual, sometimes understanding comes as to _____ this conflict started in the first place, and then the people can _____ towards the resolution.

E. Keep Emotions In Check:

1. If the person you are in conflict with comes with an accusing and confrontational _____, pray Internally and keep your own emotions under _____. Pr. 16:32
2. No resolutions are ever found when two people end up yelling at each _____, and this will only add more fuel to the _____ and postpone the resolution indefinitely. Pr. 15:18

F. Forgiveness:

1. Once the conflict has been talked out and a resolution _____, there needs to be prayer and forgiveness given if needed. Eph. 4:32
2. Holding a grudge against someone never brings _____ to your own spirit, so it is best to pray it through and move forward with a clean _____ and a free mind. Mk. 11:25

CONCLUSION: Jesus stated that His disciples would be known by their _____ to one another, so may we as the people of God do our best to work and _____ together in harmony, resolving any conflicts that arise through _____ and applying the Word of God to our lives.