

# Conflict: “A Circle of Life”

Presented by Bishop Craig E. Brown

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Excerpts from and Commentary on

*The Peace Maker - a Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*

By Ken Sande

The image features a chessboard with several pieces. In the foreground, a black king piece is lying on its side on a dark square. Behind it, several white pieces, including a king and a knight, are standing upright. The background is dark, and the scene is framed by large, overlapping green geometric shapes on the left and right sides. A white diagonal shape cuts across the center of the image, partially obscuring the chess pieces and the text.

For You Have Conflict  
With You Always

# From the Beginning - Notable Conflicts

- ▶ The Herdsmen of Abram and Lot - Gen 13:7
- ▶ Abram, Sarai, and Hagar - Gen 16:5-9
- ▶ Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Ishmael, and Hagar - Gen 21:9
- ▶ Esau and Jacob in Rebecca's womb - Gen 25:26;27:41-45;28:6-9
- ▶ Isaac and the Philistines - Gen 26:14-19
- ▶ Leah and Rachel - Gen 30:14-15
- ▶ Jacob and Laban After Jacob Flees from Laban - Gen 31:36-41
- ▶ Jacob and Laban - Gen 29:25-30

## Most of David's Life Was Conflict

- ▶ David and Saul - after David Kills Goliath (1 Sam 18:10), Saul throws a spear at David
- ▶ Saul doesn't give David his oldest Daughter Merab to be his wife as promised; Sets up David with younger daughter to hopefully be a snare to him (1 Sam 18:20)
- ▶ Saul seeks to kill David, again (1 Sam 19 - 22)
- ▶ David flees to Gath - runs into Achish and acts crazy (1 Sam 21)
- ▶ Philistines Conflict with David (1 Sam 29)
- ▶ David's Conflict with the Amalekites (1 Sam 30)
- ▶ David and Absalom (2 Sam 13 - 17)

# Conflicts with Jesus

- ▶ Laboring and Healing on the Sabbath (Matt 12)
- ▶ Pharisees Demanding Sign (Matt 12:36)
- ▶ About His Lineage and Authority to Teach (Matt 13:34)
- ▶ Over Tradition (Matt 15)
- ▶ About a Sign from Heaven (Matt 16)
- ▶ Cleansing of the Temple (Matt 21:12)
- ▶ With Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees (Matt 22)
- ▶ Betrayal by Judas and Peter's Denials (Matt 26:47, 69)
- ▶ TODAY, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, What Jesus Commanded Regarding Baptism (Matt 28:18) v. how the Apostles Baptized (Acts 2:37-39)

# Paul's Conflicts

Saul persecutes the church  
(Acts 8)

Paul and Barnabas' conflict  
with Pharisees re:  
circumcision (Acts 15)

Paul and Barnabas' conflict  
over John Mark (Acts  
15:39)

Paul's conflict with himself  
- the flesh and Spirit (Rom  
7)

Paul's / Peter at Antioch  
(Peter not eating with  
Gentiles (Gal 2:11)

Paul's Epistles - Conflict  
re: a Women's (wife's)  
role/duty in relation with  
man (husband) and "wife"  
preaching/teaching (1 Cor  
11, 1 Tim 2)

# Biblical Conflicts Today

- ▶ Attempting to interpret (relate to) Scripture from a 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> Century mindset
  - ▶ What is or is not holiness?
  - ▶ What is sin / not sin concerning dress?
  - ▶ What is sin / not sin concerning daily life activities and events?
  - ▶ What is right / wrong regarding what day and time service is held and how long service is held?
  - ▶ How often Communion is served and foot-washing done?
  - ▶ Let's not mention the social and political conflicts affecting our beliefs

## WHAT THEN CAN WE DEDUCE ABOUT CONFLICT?

- ▶ Evidently, it's not a sin (we are not doomed to hell) if we are involved in a conflict
- ▶ Everyone - regardless of their spirituality, their status, their level - is subject to have conflict with someone or something
- ▶ As long as there are at least two (2) people on this earth, there possibly will be subject to conflict of some manner.
- ▶ As long as there is a superior/subordinate relationship -
  - ▶ Pastor/congregation, supervisor/line employee, husband/wife, parent/child...
- ▶ As long as there are differing opinions -
  - ▶ Whataburger v. In-n-Out, Kansas BBQ v. Oklahoma BBQ, Kobe v. Jordon, Bird v. Magic, Dodgers v. Yankees, Brady v. Mahomes, Cowboys v. Steelers, Raiders, 49ers, Rams...
- ▶ ***THERE WILL BE CONFLICT - BUT THERE IS HOPE***



*If at all  
Possible...Live  
“peaceably”  
with all men.*

*Rom 12:18*

**To ENGAGE or  
NOT TO ENGAGE?**

That is the Question

## *To Engage ....*

- Is a particular conflict worth engaging?
  - All some people, want to do is “draw” others into their world of drama.
    - “Don’t you think I’m right?”
    - “Doesn’t this make common sense?”
- As a pastor/leader, you must know how far you will allow others to “take you there”

## *Not to Engage ...*

- Will a particular conflict going be more “damaging” or stressful to you as a leader?
- Some people really do not want a conflict resolve (and you know this)
  - When you have quickly concluded that a person’s so-called conflict with someone or some group is insignificant.
- It’s extremely important to have as much information as possible

# Be a Peacemaker

- ▶ Although Paul was referring to relationships of believers and non-believers
  - ▶ The goal of the believer is to live peaceably with “all” men, including believers
- ▶ Living peaceably takes work; sometimes you have to go the extra mile
- ▶ Living peaceably is not always possible if one of the parties does not desire to live peaceably - Why?
  - ▶ Because everything must be on their terms - 100%; no room for negotiation. “It’s my way or the highway”.
  - ▶ It is part of their *persona* to keep up confusion. *Translation*: it’s *persona* to be messy.
  - ▶ They don’t tell the *entire* truth or give *accurate* facts. They must control (lie about) the account of what transpired.
- ▶ A very wise leader said, “*If two people or groups cannot resolve their issues and they bring it me for a resolve, I will make the final decision for them...*”


# Presenters PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

## *What do you think?*

Pastors and Leaders are experiencing an increase in “blatant” insubordination from some of those they lead (T/F)



Within the past 25-30 years, members (subordinates) are more likely to have an “Absalom Spirit” toward those they serve (T/F)



While every member has the right to ask questions, some approaches toward the leader are “disrespectful” (T/F)

# The “Four G’s” to Resolving Conflict

- ▶ ***Glorify God*** (1 Cor 10:31) - Biblical peacemaking is motivated and guided by a deep desire to bring honor to God by revealing and reconciling the love and power of Jesus Christ.
- ▶ ***Get the log out of your eye*** (Matt 7:5) - Attacking others only invites counterattacks. Jesus teaches us to face up to our own contributions to a conflict before we focus on what others have done. When we overlook others’ minor offences and honestly admit our own faults:
  - ▶ Our opponent will often respond in kind and as tensions decrease, this (hopefully) leads to sincere discussion, negotiation, and reconciliation
- ▶ Sande, Ken. "The Peacemaker: a biblical guide to resolving personal conflict, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Baker Books, 2004, pps. 13,14.

# The “Four G’s” to Resolving Conflict

- ▶ ***Gently Restore*** (Gal.6:1) - When others fail to see their contribution to a conflict, we sometimes need to graciously show them their faults.
  - ▶ If they refuse to respond appropriately, Jesus calls us to involve respected friends, church leaders, or other objective individuals who can help us encourage repentance and restore peace.
- ▶ ***Go and be Reconciled*** (Matt. 5:24) - Peacemaking involves a commitment to restoring damaged relationships and negotiating just agreements.
  - ▶ When we forgive others, as Jesus has forgiven us and seek solutions that satisfy others’ interest as well as our own, the debris of conflict is cleared away and the door is opened for genuine peace.
- ▶ Sande, Ken. "The Peacemaker: a biblical guide to resolving personal conflict, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Baker Books, 2004, pp. 13,14.

*Are you serious? So, why is conflict  
sometimes good?*

# Conflict Provides Opportunities -

- ▶ There are several things I look forward to as I begin each day:
  - ▶ Prayer / meditation - quiet time with God
  - ▶ Half cup of coffee, some juice. Maybe pancakes, eggs, bacon
  - ▶ Little Conversation with my wife and kids
- ▶ The average person does not wake up each day “desiring conflict”
  - ▶ Does anyone desire to have an argument before leaving the house?
  - ▶ Does anyone desire to have road rage on their way to work or school?
  - ▶ Does anyone look forward to purposely have a miserable airline flight - fighting with fellow passengers or the flight attendants?
  - ▶ Who wants to go to a nice restaurant only to constantly complain about everything?
  - ▶ Does anyone go to church to fuss with the ushers, roll their eyes at the choir director, get upset about the pastor’s sermon, yell at the parking attendant?

# When Conflict Does Arise - *Escape Responses*

- ▶ People tend to use attributes of Escape Responses rather than resolving the conflict.
- ▶ **Denial** - One way to escape from a conflict is to pretend that it does not exist. Or we simply refuse to do what should be done to resolve the conflict properly. This response, at best, only brings temporary relief and generally make matters worse (Gen 16:1-6, 1 Sam 2:22-25).
- ▶ **Flight** - Escaping from conflict by running away.
  - ▶ Leaving the house, ending a friendship, quitting a job, filing for divorce, or changing churches
  - ▶ Flight is usually a harmful way to deal with conflict but sometimes it is the appropriate response from a confusing or emotional situation *temporarily* to calm down, organize thoughts, and pray.
  - ▶ Also in response to seriously threatening circumstances such as cases of physical or sexual abuse (1 Sam 19:9-10).
- ▶ **Suicide**



# When Conflict Does Arise - *Attack Responses*

- ▶ People who are more interested in winning a conflict than in preserving a relationship tend to use attributes of Attack Responses. They view as a contest or chance to assert their rights, to control others or take advantage of their situation
  - ▶ *Assault* - By trying to overcome an opponent by using various forms of force or intimidation - verbal attacks (including gossip and slander), physical violence or efforts to damage a person financially or professionally (Acts 6:8-15).

# When Conflict Does Arise - *Attack Responses*

- ▶ *Litigation* - Take a person to court in order to force them to bend to our will.
  - ▶ Although some conflicts may be legitimately taken before a civil judge, lawsuits usually damage relationships and often fail to achieve complete justice. Ex: property rights or infringement upon rights-of-way, financial misconduct, fraud/deceit, scams, dark web activity stealing identity, etc.
  - ▶ Christians are commanded to settle their differences within the church rather than in the civil courts.
- ▶ *Murder* - Some people (not the saints) are so desperate to win a dispute, they will try to kill those who oppose them.

# When Conflict Does Arise - *Peacemaking Responses*

- ▶ Three of the *Peacemaking Responses* may be referred to as “personal peacemaking” - they are carried out personally and privately. Just between you and the other party:
  - ▶ *Overlook an Offense*- Many disputes are so insignificant that they should be resolved by quietly and deliberately overlooking an offence; however, offenses that have damaged emotionally or torn apart relationships cannot just be “overlooked” (winked at, kept quiet.) They must be dealt with - **TAKE THE BULL BY THE HORNS!**
  - ▶ *Reconciliation* - If an offense is too serious to overlook or has damaged the relationship, we need to resolve personal or relational through confession, loving correction, and forgiveness (if your brother has something against you...go and be reconciled (Matt 5:23-24; see Prov.28:13)).

# When Conflict Does Arise - *Peacemaking Responses*

- ▶ *Negotiation* - Even if we successfully resolve relational issues we may still need to work through *material* issues related to money, property, or rights. “Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others (Phil. 2:4).
- ▶ When a dispute cannot be resolved through one of the personal peacemaking responses, God calls us to use one of the next three peacemaking responses - “assisted peacemaking” requiring the involvement of other people from your church, organization, or Christian community.
  - ▶ *Mediation* - If two people cannot reach an agreement in private, they should ask one or more objective outside people to help them communicate more effectively and explore possible solutions.
  - ▶ *Arbitration* - When you and an opponent cannot come to a voluntary agreement on an issue, you may appoint one or more arbitrators to listen to your arguments and render a binding decision to settle the issue.

# When Conflict Does Arise - *Peacemaking Responses*

- ▶ *Accountability* - If a person who professes to be a Christian refuses to be reconciled and do what is right, Jesus commands church leaders to formally intervene to hold him or her accountable to Scripture and to promote repentance, justice, and forgiveness (Matt. 18:17).
- ▶ CONFIRM, CONFIRM, CONFIRM
  - ▶ Conflict cannot be resolved without having accurate information
  - ▶ Therefore, you must go to the source - or get as close to the source as possible - ensuring you know exactly what the issues are...the facts.
    - ▶ Hearing from Mother Goodjoint, who was eavesdropping on Dea. Shoutingshoes, who was on the phone with Missionary Imanointing...
    - ▶ Is a recipe for embarrassment and more confusion

# *Master Communication and You Master Conflict*

Proverbs 15:1-7

1. Remain calm and gentle when confronting conflict and your example will be come contagious (v. 1).
2. Speak wisely, making sure your information is truthful and accurate (v. 2).
3. Remember, God is the ultimate judge and will execute judgement (v. 3).
4. Use your words to foster healing; fix the problem, not the blame (V. 4).
5. Stay teachable; be open to correction and quick. to apologize when wrong (v. 5).
6. Add value to everyone who contacts you, even when you disagree (v. 6).
7. Speak words that spread knowledge and understanding (V. 7).

*Conflict: “A difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires”.*

# Conflict is not necessarily bad

- ▶ **Some differences are natural and beneficial.**
  - ▶ As God has created us as individuals, human beings will often have differing opinions, convictions, desires, perspectives, and priorities.
  - ▶ Many of these differences are not inherently right/wrong, they are simply the result of God-given diversity and personal preferences (1 Cor. 12:21-31).
- ▶ **However...not all conflict is natural or beneficial.**
  - ▶ The Bible teaches that many disagreements are the direct result of sinful attitudes and behavior
  - ▶ James 4:1-2 - *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it.*



# Keeping Your Cool When Things Get Hot

## *Anger - as a result of Conflict*

- ▶ **Definition of anger:** “Natural, Physical, Emotional response to a *perceived injustice*”
- ▶ Gen. 1:27 - Man was created in God’s image
  - God gets angry so we too get angry because we were made in God’s image.
  - Jesus was angry toward the hypocritical Pharisees and the Money Changers (the robbers, thieves).
- Solomon says, “Control Your Anger” (Prov 15:1, 19:11)
  1. Call an emotional “time out” remove yourself
  2. Analyze the cause of anger - because of the conflict
    - What is the real cause of the anger?
    - Do I have complete /accurate information?
  3. Learn to overlook minor offenses
    - such as someone not returning your call,
    - when you expected or someone forgetting to wish you happy birthday
  4. Learn to forgive major offenses:
    - True Forgiveness - the person admits when they are wrong; in fact, true forgiveness actually “blames” someone for what they’ve done

# Keeping Your Cool When Things Get Hot

## *Anger - as a result of Conflict*

- True forgiveness acknowledges your offenders' obligations to you; offenses create obligations; need to acknowledge what they've done - they owe you - to acknowledge the debt to you.
- True Forgiveness releases the offender of his obligation to you. That is, you must "let go," you must release. Must give up the right to hurt them for hurting you (not the right of justice or recompense).
  - Give it over to God or someone else to enact justice. (Eph 4:32) *"Be kind to one another - forgive"*
- Jeffress, Dr. Robert, "The Solomon Secrets", Pathway to Victory radio broadcast

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, layered effect.

# *Conflict Resolution: Jesus Taught How to Manage Conflict*

The Maxwell Leadership Bible, Third Edition - John C. Maxwell

## Matthew 18

- ▶ There may be no clearer passage in the Gospels on conflict resolution than Matthew 18. While Jesus spoke about addressing sin in the church, His words express broader principles.
  - ▶ Addressing and healing offenses should be a priority for us.
  - ▶ Conflict will arise in any organization. (Yes - in Christ Holy Sanctified Church; in your church\*).
  - ▶ Humans disagree because they are wired differently and have different agendas. (Yes - saved, sanctified, Holy Ghost-filled, tongue talking folk\*).
- ▶ \*Bishop Craig E. Brown (not from the Maxwell Leadership Bible)

# What Jesus taught about organizational conflict when someone has clearly done wrong

- 1) Initial the contact (v.15)
- 2) Confront the person in private (v.15)
- 3) If no resolution comes, meet again with one or two more people (v.16)
- 4) Confirm the facts in a meeting and work toward a solution (v. 16)
- 5) If no resolution comes, bring the issue before the church or organization (v.17)
- 6) Agree upon the truth and the appropriate options for the offender (v. 17)
- 7) If no resolution comes, release the offender from the church or organization (v. 17)

## What Jesus taught about organizational conflict when someone has clearly done wrong

- ▶ Behind the process of conflict resolution lies the authority Jesus has given church leaders (Matt 18:18-20). We must act wisely because:
  - ▶ We have God-given authority (18:18)
  - ▶ God confirms and supports the decisions made in harmony (18:19)
  - ▶ He is present when we gather in His name (18:20)

# Live At Peace

- ▶ Peace is a part of God's character - He is referred to as "the God of peace" (Rom 15:33; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil. 4:9; Heb. 13:20; Jud 6:24).
- ▶ Peace is one the great blessings God give to those who follow Him (Lev 26:6, Num 6:24,-26; Jug 5:31; Ps. 29:11; 119:165; Prov. 16:7; Micah 4:1-4; Gal. 6:16).
- ▶ God repeatedly commands His people to seek and pursue peace (Ps:34:14; Jer. 29:7; Rom.14:19; 1 Cor. 7:15; 2 Cor. 3:15; 1Thess. 5:13; Heb. 12:14).
- ▶ God describes His covenant with His People in terms of peace (Num 25:12; Isa. 54:10; Ezek. 34:25; 37:26; Mal. 2:5).
- ▶ God taught His people to use the word *peace* (Hebrew shalom and Greek Eirene) as a standard form of greeting (Judg. 6:12; 1 Sam. 16:5; Juke 24:36).
- ▶ Nearly all of the new Testament Epistles either begin or end with a prayer for peace (Rom. 1:7; 15:13; gal. 1:3; 2 Thess.3:16).
  
- ▶ Sande, Ken. "The Peacemaker: a biblical guide to resolving personal conflict, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Baker Books, 2004, pp. 44.

# Live At Peace

- ▶ **Peace With God** - Jesus has made it possible for us to have peace with God.
  - ▶ For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him [Christ], and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things....by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Colossians 1:19-20
  - ▶ Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. Romans 5:1-2
- ▶ **Peace with Others** - Jesus' sacrifice on the cross opened the way for you to enjoy peace with other people (Eph. 2:11-18). This peace which is often referred to as "unity" (Ps. 133:1) is not simply the absence of conflict and strife. Unity is the presence of genuine harmony, understanding, and goodwill between people.



# Live At Peace

- ▶ **Peace Within Yourself** - Through Jesus, you can also experience peace within yourself. It is a gift that God gives only to those who believe in His Son and obey His commandments (1 John 3:21-24). *Internal Peace is a by product of righteousness* and revealed throughout Scripture:
  - ▶ “You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in You” (Isa.26:3).
  - ▶ “The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever” (Isa 37:17).
  - ▶ “If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea” (Isa. 48:18).

# References

- ▶ Scripture is taken from the HOLY BIBLE:
  - ▶ New International Version® NIV®. Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan
  - ▶ The New King James Version (NKJV) Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson
- ▶ The Maxwell Leadership Bible, Third Edition
  - ▶ By John C. Maxwell
- ▶ Keeping Your Cool When Things Get Hot
  - ▶ Outline and Commentary by Bishop Craig E. Brown
    - ▶ By Dr. Robert Jeffress, “The Solomon Secrets”, Pathway to Victory
- ▶ Counseling and Spiritual Authority (Course, Independent Study)
  - ▶ Professors: Bishop Johnny J. Young, Ph.D. and Bishop James H. Hudson, Ph.D.