

Relational Revolution- Week 3

Conflict

Icebreaker: Can you recall a humorous family conflict or event that happened when you were a child that you still talk about when you reminisce as a family? Or can you recall a situational conflict scene you watched on TV or in a movie? What about that scene made an impression on you?

Series Recap: The goal is to grow in our ability to love God and one another as well. Jesus expects this from us as his followers.

Grow in Love

Matthew 22:36-39 *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.” –*

1 John 4:16-19 *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 19 We love because he first loved us.*

1. What kind of love did Jesus command us to follow? Why must this love be more than a feeling?

2. Why is this love known as “perfect love”? (1 John 4:16-18)

Conflict- Love Damper

Genesis 4:3-8 *3In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. 4And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. 6Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.” 8Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.*

3. How is the Bible’s early account of conflict an omen of things to come for us? (Genesis 4:3-8)

4. How did your family handle conflict while you were growing up?

Ephesians 4:26-27, 29-32 *“In your anger do not sin” Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.... 29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

5. What is anger and what role does anger play in conflicts?

6. What challenges you from the list of do's and do not's in the above passage?

Ephesians 6:10-12 *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

7. Whenever we have conflicts, what must we remember according to Ephesians 6:12?

8. How can we avoid sinning and even experience victory in the storms of conflict? (Romans 14:15-20, Ephesians 6:10-12)

Romans 14:15-20 *If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. 16 Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. 17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. 19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. 20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.*

Conflict Response Choices

Conflict is inevitable! How we RESPOND to conflict is how we can take unresolved tension and grow it into a maturing relationship. Even so, we have options.

Conflict Choice #1 - False Peace

One option is to choose a FALSE PEACE. . .

“They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ But there is no peace.” - Jeremiah 6:14

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” - Matthew 5:9

9. What is the difference between being peace KEEPERS (doing everything we can NOT to rock the boat or ruffle feathers) and peace MAKERS (proactively pursue peace, and that can mean staring down conflict and taking it on directly)?

10. How can avoiding conflict for the sake of peace lead to greater relational issues?

Conflict Choice #2 - Fight Dirty. Examples of fighting dirty

- Denial
- Sarcasm
- Silent Treatment
- Shouting
- Using “You always” or “You never”
- Passive-Aggressive

11. Now, be honest, which of these dirty fighting techniques tends to be your go-to?

12. Why do we resort to fighting dirty when we are in conflict?

Conflict Choice #3 - Fight Clean

Pete Scazzero says: “A clean fight is a negotiation between two people for the sake of their relationship.”

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil (That would be dirty fighting). Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. (There is something for us to do.) If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (That is good clean fighting) - Romans 12:17-18

13. What does it look like to fight cleanly?

14. How does this passage help us define our role in making peace?

Establish Conflict Guidelines

- Pray (Asking the Holy Spirit for wisdom, discernment, and direction)
- Everyone speaks
- Commit to clarity and closure
- Attack Problems, Not People
- Act! Don't React
- Take responsibility for your actions

15. Which of the above do you think could be helpful to you as you commit to clean fighting? (Romans 14:15-20)

Don't win the argument - Win the relationship!