

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS

“The choice is not whether to experience conflict or not, but whether it will be managed constructively or destructively.” • Quote by Lewis Douglas in Resolving Church Conflict.

THE BASICS

Cardinal Rules

- The earlier conflict is dealt with the easier it is managed.
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- Conflict should be dealt with when it seems so trivial.
- Conflict can get to a point of no return!!

Conflict is usually evaluated with five levels:

1. There is a problem to solve.
 - Real differences exist.
 - Parties open to one another to solve the problem
2. Disagreement - We strive to come out looking good.
 - Move into self-protection mode
 - People still open to compromise to solve the problem.
3. Contest - We begin to hold to a position and we want to be sure to win.
 - Begin to take sides
 - Dispute over who is working for peace.
4. Fight/Flight - Break the relationship by either leaving or get the other party to withdraw.
 - Look for ways to hurt, weaken, punish, or humiliate other party.
 - Win/Lose situation
5. Unmanageable - Destroy the other party
 - Problem is no longer concern, just to win.
 - Physical violence can happen here.

THE DYNAMICS OF CONFLICT

1. Conflict is not always negative. It can have some very positive results.
2. Conflict can help clarify the issues and strengthen the unity and spirit of God's people.
3. Not all conflict is sinful but poorly managed conflict can result in sinful behavior.

Communication In Conflict

- Communication plays a key role whenever conflict exists.
- Conflict cannot exist without communication.
- Conflict cannot be resolved without communication.
- Good communication promotes dialog
- Good communication decreases tension -
A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1
- Good communication strives to solve problems, not persecute.

No one in the church can function in a neutral capacity.