



Leadership Forum • October 22, 2011
 “Conflict Resolution”

RESOURCES

- “Conflict: A Redemptive Opportunity” (CCEF Booklet), by Timothy Lane
- *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, by Ken Sande
- *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict*, by Alfred Poirier
- *Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People in the Church*, by Marshall Shelley
- *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change*, by Paul Tripp

WHAT IS “CONFLICT”?

[Sande, 29; Poirier, 29] “A difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.”

[James 4:1-2] ¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions [or, *pleasures*; Gk: *hedonon*] are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.

[Poirier, 30-35] “Common Occasions That Result in Church Conflicts”

Divided Allegiances

Making of Boundary Markers

Authority Issues

Personal Affairs

[Shelley, 37-41] Common Varieties of “Dragons”

The Bird Dog

The Busybody

The Wet Blanket

The Sniper

The Entrepreneur

The Bookkeeper

Captain Bluster

The Merchant of Muck

The Fickle Financier

The Legalist

[Shelley, 42-46] “The worst dragons may be, in the beginning, the pastor’s strongest supporters... Dragons often work overhard initially at befriending you... Dragons usually compare you to their former pastor... Dragons often sensed a call to ministry at one time.”

RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

[Sande, 22] “The Slippery Slope of Conflict”



BIBLICAL PEACEMAKING

[Mt. 5] “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

[Ps. 34:14] Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

[Rom. 12:18] If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

[Rom. 14:19] Let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

[2 Cor. 13:11] Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

[Heb. 12:14] Strive for peace with everyone...

[Jas. 3:18] A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

[2 Cor. 5:18-20] ¹⁸ God... through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

[Poirier, 13] “Too often [we] view peacemaking as only a tool of ministry rather than a habit of being. Instead of *being* ministers of reconciliation, we confine peacemaking to special crisis situations within the church.”

[Sande, 20] “When someone mistreats or opposes us, our instinctive reaction is to justify ourselves and do everything we can to get our way. This selfish attitude usually leads to impulsive decisions that only make matters worse. The gospel of Jesus Christ provides the way out of this downward spiral. When we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross, our blinding self-absorption can be replaced with a liberating desire to draw attention to the goodness and power of God... Focusing on God is the key to resolving conflict constructively. When we remember his mercy and draw on his strength, we invariably see things more clearly and respond to conflict more wisely. In doing so we find far better solutions to our problems. At the same time, we can show others that there really is a God and that he delights in helping us do things we could never do on our own.”

[Poirier, 14] “We need to be asking how God’s sovereignty ought to shape our responses to conflict. Are these conflicts intrusions into ministry, accidents and obstacles to the gospel, or are they assignments from God—the very means by which he causes us to see our poverty and the riches of his wisdom, power, justice, and mercy?”

[Poirier, 73] “When the ancients looked around, they too seemed to see conflict as one of the fundamental realities of human existence. It is little wonder that when they wrote their cosmologies, they began with the gods fighting among themselves. What does inspire wonder, though, is how the biblical story begins so differently... Creation begins with the *God of peace*.”

[Jn. 17:20-21] “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

[Poirier, 27] “Peacemaking is Christology.”

[Mt. 15:18-19] “What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander.”

[Poirier, 47] “To know what rules people’s hearts is to know what rules their conflicts. Once we understand what rules their hearts, we can better apply the gospel so that changed hearts will lead to changed lives.”

[Poirier, 53-58] Our desires “demand,” “damn,” “distort,” “deceive,” and reveal the idolatry of our hearts.

[Sande, 12-13] “The Four G’s” *Glorify God* (1 Cor. 10:31)
 Get the log out of your eye (Mt. 7:5; Prov. 19:11; 28:13)
 Gently restore (Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:15)
 Go and be reconciled (Mt. 5:24; Col. 3:13; Phil. 2:4; Rom. 12:21)

[Mt. 5:23-24] “If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

[Mt. 18:15-20] “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

[Membership Vow #5] “Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?”

[BCO 27-3] “The exercise of discipline is highly important and necessary. In its proper usage discipline maintains: a) the glory of God, b) the purity of His Church, and c) the keeping and reclaiming of disobedient sinners. Discipline is for the purpose of godliness (1 Tim. 4:7); therefore, it demands a self-examination under Scripture.