

RESOLVING CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE

- Proverbs 28:26; “*He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered.*”
- Jeremiah 17:9 “The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is”
- We have a natural bent in our flesh to blame others for problems.
- It’s more important to honor the Lord and love your spouse than to be “right”.
- Proverbs 21:2 “*Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts.*”

1. PRAY: EXAMINE YOUR HEART BEFORE THE LORD

Matt 7:1-5

“Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

1. PRAY: EXAMINE YOUR HEART BEFORE THE LORD

- ▶ Examine your attitude. Have you had a critical, negative, or overly sensitive attitude that has led to unnecessary conflict?
- ▶ Examine your words and actions. Have your sinful words and actions contributed to the conflict?

1. PRAY: SEEK GOD'S WISDOM

- ▶ Psalms 25:4-5 “Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day.”
- ▶ James 1:2-6 “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

1. PRAY: YOUR SPOUSE'S SANCTIFICATION

- ▶ Col. 1:9-14 "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

2. DETERMINE IF IT IS WORTH CONFRONTING

Ps. 19:11 "Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."

- ▶ As a general rule, an offense should be overlooked if you can answer "No" to the following:
 - ▶ Is the offense clear disobedience to God?
 - ▶ Will it permanently damage a relationship?
 - ▶ Is it hurting other people?
 - ▶ Is it hurting the offender him/herself?

IF NO, LET IT GO!

2. DETERMINE IF IT IS WORTH CONFRONTING

- ▶ If “YES”:
- ▶ Pray for humility and wisdom.
- ▶ Plan your words.
- ▶ Avoid making accusations.
- ▶ Anticipate reactions.
- ▶ Right time and place.
- ▶ Talk in person.
- ▶ Give the benefit of the doubt and assume the best of your spouse.
- ▶ Listen.
- ▶ Keep reconciliation and sanctification the goal.

3. THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

- ▶ Is it kind? Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it loving?

Proverbs 3:3 “Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.”

Proverbs 12:18 “There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing”

Proverbs 15:1 “A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”

3. THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

Proverbs 11:13 “*Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.*”

Proverbs 25:23 “*As surely as a north wind brings rain, so a gossiping tongue causes anger!*”

4. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOURSELF

- ▶ Admit anything you did that was wrong, hurtful, sinful or just stupid.
- ▶ Apologize for how your words or actions affected the other person.
- ▶ Unqualified apologies are the only real apologies.
- ▶ Accept appropriate consequences.
- ▶ Ask for forgiveness.

5. ASK FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO SPEAK INTO THE SITUATION

- ▶ Someone that is committed to seeing both parties reconciled.
- ▶ Someone that both parties trust.
- ▶ Don't try to get the person on your "side".

6. LOOK TO JESUS

- ▶ Pursue Christ-like Humility
 - ▶ Phil. 2:1-8
- ▶ Demonstrate Christ-like Love
 - ▶ 1 Cor. 13:4-7
- ▶ Show Christ-like forgiveness
 - ▶ Col. 3:12-13

