

4Ws

what's  
wrong  
with  
us?

# RESOLVE CONFLICTS IN TRUTH AND LOVE

JULY 2, 2023

## WORSHIP

King Jesus, House of the Lord, Solid Ground, Jesus at the Center

## WELCOME

What conflicts or wars are you aware of that's going on between nations in the world today?

## WORD

### 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17-18 (READ ALSO FROM VERSE 1 ONWARDS)

<sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. <sup>18</sup> For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

We like to focus on the wrongdoings of others. In 1 Corinthians, we witness conflict that still apply to churches today. The word CORINTHIAN described people with loose morals. The Corinthian church faced division, strife, immorality and incest, issues on eating, abuse of spiritual gifts, and divisive doctrinal issues. Though amazingly transformed by the Gospel, they were works in progress like all of us today.

This message focuses on how to **RESOLVE CONFLICTS IN TRUTH AND LOVE**. Our relationships face many inevitable conflicts. We are tempted to ignore them, but we must address these conflicts. Three principles from 1 Corinthians 1 help us do this:

#### 1. DEVELOP DIVINE PERSPECTIVE

**1 Corinthians 1:1-3** opens Paul's letter, where he establishes his authority in ministry – as an “apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God”. He mentions the church (ekklesia – called out) of God in Corinth, describing them as sanctified (declared holy, set apart) in Christ and “saints” by calling– he addressed believers, and sees them not as they are or as their past – but for what they can become in Christ. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** shows how problematic their culture was, some were formerly fornicators, idolaters, thieves, covetous, swindlers. But they were washed, sanctified, and justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Corinthians were very passionate worshippers, but they had a problematic culture. Paul establishes they no longer hold this identity. This is how God sees us – who we are now in Jesus. In God's eyes we are forgiven, and we are saved! **Philippians 1:6** reminds us that He who began a good work in us, coming into a personal knowledge of the gospel, will keep on working in us to become more and more like Christ!

**1 Corinthians 1:4-9** shows us how Paul employed the “sandwich principle” – he cited some positive things about them --- as a product of God's grace; with amazing testimonies, spiritual gifts, and many were godly, awaiting Jesus' return. God is at work in our lives – just like He was at work in the Corinthian believers. That's why we don't give up on people – but when we see problems, what do we do?

#### 2. ADDRESS THE ROOT PROBLEM

We try so much to resolve symptoms, but a good doctor will try to resolve what is causing the symptoms. We need to understand biblical perspective, and when we find the root problem, we must speak the truth in love (**Ephesians 4:15**) to help people grow.

Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians was like an appeal (**vv. 10-11**) – that they be united in Christ Jesus. The Bible is not about uniformity but in the midst of differences, we must be united in our mission, love for God, and in the essentials of the faith. There were quarrels and conflicts in the Corinthian church (**vv.12-13**), it was divided into



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## WORD

four groups – those evangelized by Paul, those taught by Apollos, those ministered to by Cephas (Peter), and then there were those who claim to belong to Christ.

The problem is that when we focus on people, not on Christ, we will always have struggles. Paul mentions “men of the flesh” (carnal, not controlled by the Spirit), described like babies because of the jealousy and strife in them (**1 Corinthians 3:1-3**). Some Christians are baby Christians – when they don’t get their way, they grumble. They focus on themselves, and this is where sin usually begins. **Galatians 5:19-21** describe deeds of the flesh but there is a big difference between those who live in sin, and those who from time to time, stumble. The lifestyle we all must have is to be aligned with Christ!

### 3. FOCUS ON JESUS

This is the clear solution for the Corinthian believers (and to us as well). **1 Corinthians 1:14-18** is where Paul expressed his desire to not gain acknowledgement for himself – the objective was always the CROSS OF CHRIST. It is in the NAME OF JESUS CHRIST that we find our worth and salvation. Baptism was mentioned here, but baptism doesn’t save us – rather, it is what Christ has done on the cross. Only Jesus has the power to save us from ourselves and give us new hearts. **Hebrews 12:2** reminds us to fix our eyes on Jesus – to turn away from looking back, or around us, and look forward to Christ. The best people can still disappoint us, and that is why we need to focus on Jesus Christ alone.

**Philippians 2:2-4** is a wonderful calling – to be of the same mind, same purpose, same love – set aside selfishness, and embrace humility. Pride usually gets in the way and creates many problems in our lives and our ministry – it’s not bad to think of ourselves, but we are commanded to also think of others and focus on Jesus! **Verses 6-8** gives us Jesus’ model – He existed in the **form (morphé) of God** – an inner reality that does not change – He is God, in very nature and essence. However, He was found in appearance (**schema**) of man, not giving up divinity, but giving up privileges as He took the form of a real man to be able to suffer, bleed, and die for mankind which He intended to save! This is the “hypostatic” union – Jesus is 100% God, and 100% man. If our Savior was willing to give up divine privileges, is it really that hard for us to think of others and set aside selfishness and pride? For the humility of Jesus the God-man, God exalted His Name – the Lord, for eternity and will forever be God and man.

Paul reminded Corinthians to look at Jesus to resolve their conflicts and factions, may we also do the same. God’s pleasure must be our main focus (**2 Corinthians 5:9**). In essentials (salvation through Jesus, the issue of sin, etc) – unity, in non-essentials (debatable issues like form, music, etc) – liberty, and in all others, charity. Let us be problem-solvers in Christ (**Proverbs 26:20-21**)!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

### 1. Self-Check.

How do you usually resolve problems and conflicts?

### 2. Setting It Right.

Why is the gospel the “ultimate source” of unity?

### 3. Living It Out.

What specific action do you commit to do upon hearing the message today?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for loved ones who are not yet reconciled to God through Christ. Help them also reconcile with others they are in conflict with. Share the gospel of peace with them, introduce them to Jesus Christ, the only One who can reconcile man with God.

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### 1. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### 2. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

### 3. Church

- That CCF members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches world-wide

### 4. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### 5. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

## MEMORY VERSE

### 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10

<sup>10</sup> Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.