Handling Conflict Biblically

SKILLS:
HANDLING DISAPPOINTING RELATIONSHIPS

Review

- It's better to be wronged than to defame the name of Christ.

- The church has wisdom to judge matters and guide according to God's truth.

- Business conflict should reflect the same clear focus on truth, grace and understanding that God commands for interpersonal conflict.

Biblical Help for Disappointing Relationships

- Sometimes, disappointments have clear, focused resolutions (e.g. sin confronted by church pursuit/discipline, which results in either repentance or disfellowship).

- Other times, relationships exist in the "gray areas" without as much driven resolution. How do we handle these situations?

Identify Your Lord

- Galatians 1:10 – You cannot seek men's ultimate favor and still serve Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31 – Christians want to glorify Christ in everything.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4 – We want to please the One Who judges our hearts.
- Luke 19:17 – We want to be commended as faithful slaves of God.
- One of the primary challenges of human relationships is seeking to honor men and women around us while obeying God. When the two conflict, we commit to obeying God.

Keep Asking:
Is There a Log In My Eye?

- Matthew 7:5 – "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."

- Why does this keep coming up?

- Because, even when dealing with unsaved spouses, overbearing bosses, disobedient children and difficult friendships, we have the huge potential to sin.

Keep Remembering:
I Deserve Nothing

- Philippians 2:5-6 – Christ did not hold own to His rights.
- Philippians 2:7-8 – Christ chose humble servitude.
- 1 Corinthians 9:12, 15 – Paul surrendered his rights in order to serve the churches.
- If we truly desire to please God and not ourselves, many of our "needs" and "rights" fade in importance.
- 1 Corinthians 4:5 – "…each man's praise will come to him from God."
- By recognizing that everyone should be worshipping God, we stop demanding our own satisfaction from others.

Patience for Growth

- Sin – Failing to honor God by commission or omission
- Growth – Acquiring and applying doctrine, resulting in well-trained character and actions that honor God
- Growth is closely connected to one's tendency to sin, but they are not the same.
- God is patient with sinners (1 Timothy 1:16).
- He expects His servants to be patient while instructing others (1 Thessalonians 5:14, 2 Timothy 4:2).
- Patience, however, is not an excuse to ignore a sinning brother or sister (e.g. 1 Corinthians 5:2, 2 Corinthians 11:19-21).

Patience for People, Not Sin

- The church is called to patiently accept:
  - Those who have extra standards beyond Biblical absolutes (Romans 14:1)
  - Those who are weak and fainthearted in their Christian walk (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
  - Those who are out of line (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
  - All believers (Ephesians 4:1-2)
  - Unbelievers (cf. God's attitude in 2 Peter 3:9)
- The church cannot accept:
  - Open sin (1 Corinthians 5:1-2, 11)
  - False Doctrine (e.g. 2 Timothy 2:16-18)

Exalt God, Not The Situation

- You might be frustrated that a difficult situation seems to be outside of your control.
- IT IS!!! (Ephesians 1:11)
- You might be frustrated that you can't change someone's mind, stop them from harming themselves and set them on the right path.
- YOU CAN'T!!! (Ephesians 1:11)
- God is the sole sovereign of these situations.
- If you are a believer, you can be confident that God's sovereignty means your benefit (Genesis 50:20, Romans 8:28).

How to Exalt God in Trials

- Define what is good according to God's terms. Romans 8:29-30 says that God is on a mission to sanctify you.
- Delight in God's sovereignty by praising is wisdom and thanking Him for his care (e.g. Psalm 31:1-5).
- Depend on God's care through faithful prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17, James 1:5-6).
- Delete any idea that you will accomplish anything profitable by your own strength (Psalm 90:17)

Questions