



Class 4. Is This Really Worth Fighting Over?

Proverbs 19:11

- One of Christ's most famous commandments about Conflict Resolution is [Matt. 7:3-5](#)
- People often throw this verse around to "scare" you from talking to others about their faults
- If you read it carefully, though, it doesn't forbid loving correction, it forbids **premature** and **improper** correction
- Before you talk to others about their faults, Jesus wants you to face up to your own
- Once you have dealt with your contribution to a conflict, then you may approach others about theirs
- As you examine your role in the conflict, it helpful to look for two things:
 - 1) Do you have an **overly sensitive attitude** which causes you to be offended too easily by other's behavior?
 - 2) Have you contributed to the conflict through your own **sinful behavior**?
- This week we'll talk about **attitude** issues, and next week we'll talk about **behavior** issues

DEFINE THE ISSUES

- As you evaluate your role in a conflict, it is helpful to clearly define the issues that separate you from the other people
- Conflicts generally involve two kinds of issues: Material and Personal
- **Material Issues** involve substantive matters like money, property, rights & responsibilities - These types of issues are best resolved through Negotiation, which we will discuss in several weeks

- **Personal Issues** related to what happens between persons
- These issues involve our attitudes and feelings towards others that result from how we have treated one another
- Personal Issues are often expressed in thoughts of upset, or feelings of frustration or anger
- These types of issues are best resolved through Overlooking, Confession, or Forgiveness which we will discuss in future weeks
- Some conflicts involve ONLY Material Issues and other ONLY Personal Issues, but MOST disputes involve BOTH kinds of issues getting tangled up together
- A good example is Luke 12:13-15
- The Material Issue was the dividing of the Inheritance, and the Personal Issue was the brother's greed which kept them from resolving the conflict in a cooperative way
- In order to properly resolve your conflicts, you have to define the issues
- First try to agree on the primary Material Issues or Issues
- Then identify the primary Personal Issues
- Only after you successfully sort out the issues can you begin to take steps to resolve
- In many cases, if you look at a particular issues from a Bible perspective, you will realize that it simply not worth fighting over
- In many cases, the best way to resolve a conflict is to simply overlook the personal offenses of others (Prov. 19:11 as above - [Prov 17:14](#), [1 Pet 4:8](#), Eph 4:2, [Col 3:13](#))
- One of the reasons we sometimes find it difficult to overlook offenses is that we have an overly sensitive attitude or a tendency to dwell on what others have done
- In [Philippians 4:2-9](#) Paul gives instructions on how to examine your attitude in five easy steps
 - 1) Rejoice in the Lord always - He even repeats it, "Again I say Rejoice!" - What on Earth is so important that you have to fight about it? Open your eyes and think about how joyful you should be because of what God has given
 - 2) Let your gentleness be evident to all - Being gentle in the midst of a conflict is a good way give grace to others, and guards you from speaking or acting harshly - Verse 5

- 3) Replace anxiety with prayer - Stress builds when we are experiencing conflict. Paul knew that you can't just stop being anxious, so he instructs us to replace worrying with "prayer and petition and thanksgiving" - Verse 6
- 4) See things as they really are - A negative perspective dwells on the hurt and how little you deserve it - You overcome this by thinking about the qualities of others that are true, noble, right, lovely, etc. - Verse 8
- 5) Practice what you've learned - Verse 9 - All of the Bible Classes, Sunday Schools, Exhortations and Lectures you have attended are in VAIN unless you put it into practice - Then "the God of Peace will be with you"

- Another way to avoid conflict is to consider the cost of unresolved conflict

- As long as a disagreement is unresolved, there is potential for further damage to the relationship

- Nothing resolves it faster than counting the costs of a conflict at the outset of a dispute and compare them to the benefits of quickly settling the matter ([Matt 5:25-26](#))

- Some people resist overlooking offenses and settling disputes quickly because they think that they "rights" and it would be "fair" to just let the other person off

- Where would we be if God thought that same way

- God is compassionate and merciful and expects us to treat each other the same way (Luke 6:36 - Be merciful just as your Father is merciful)

APPLICATION - Thinking about a conflict you have in your life

- 1) Define the Material Issues in this conflict
- 2) Define the Personal Issues in this conflict
- 3) Which Personal Issues are having the greatest influence on your actions?
- 4) Check your attitude - Are you being kind and gentle? Have you been anxious about this? What is GOOD about the person you are involved in the conflict with?
- 5) Which of the offenses that they have done against you can you simply overlook?
- 6) Which of the Material Issues in Answer #1 can you simply give in on?