

HANDLING CONFLICTS AND FIGHTS IN THE CHURCH...

RCCG FAMILY PRAISE CHAPEL

BIBLE STUDY 2020

DEFINITION

- “conflict is a difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone else’s opinion or purpose.”
- “conflict in the congregation is a situation in which two or more members or factions struggle aggressively over what is or appears to be mutually exclusive beliefs, values or assumed powers or goals.”

THE QUESTION: HOW DO YOU HANDLE CONFLICT WHEN IT ARISES?

- A recent survey of 60 pastors on how they resolve **church** conflict showed the following:
 - talk about it (44%)
 - prayer (25%)
 - kindness (18%)
 - church discipline (18 %)
 - read Bible (5%)
 - fasting (2%)
 - run away (2%).

SOME OF THE MOST TYPICAL RESPONSES TO CONFLICT ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- **1. Avoiding:** “Problem? What problem?”
- **2. Accommodating:** “I give up” (people pleasers)
- **3. Compromising:** “Let’s just split the difference”
- **4. Competing:** “I win; you lose”
- **5. Collaborating:** “You scratch my back, and I’ll scratch yours”.

II TIMOTHY 2:23-26

- A church is a family and conflicts are **unavoidable**, but how it is handled will determine whether the experience will be positive or negative.
- **Are there any issues worth battling over?** – What are the majors and minors? The following are four issues worth battling over in the church:
 - **1. Biblical fidelity.** No discounting the teachings of Christ
 - **2. Living out what we believe.** Biblical teaching must affect daily lives
 - **3. Our church's unity.** All members must support this, divisiveness is sin
 - **4. Verbal integrity.** Remaining truthful in confrontation or conflict.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION GENERAL PRINCIPLES:



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- **Your Temper - Your temper is the number one thing you have control over. “Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly”. – Proverbs 14:29; 15:18; 25:8; Eccl. 7:9; Num 12:3; Jm. 1:19; 3:17-18**

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- **Evaluate your part in the conflict** – what did you contribute to get to where you are?
 - **Matthew 7:1-5** (removing the log from your own eye first is necessary before helping others).

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- **Leave Revenge to God. Never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God.** For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the Lord. – **Lev. 19:18; Romans 12:19 (14-21); Prov 24:29; Luke 6:27-29**
 - You don’t have all of the facts and the way you respond can place you in opposition to God and His clear judgment **1 Sam 25:26, 33 (David and Abigail); prophecy against Edom Ezek. 25:12-13.**

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- **Focus on the Positive and be careful what you say. – 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Prov 15:1**
Emphasize the positive and alleviate the negative.
Ephesians 4:29

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- **You are Responsible for Your Own Behavior.** The reality is that our behavior is not dependent on the behavior of someone else.
 - Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. – **Romans 12:17; Prov 12:19; Matt 5:39; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Pet 3:9; 1 Cor 6:6-7; Col 4:5.**

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- **Accept Each Other's Faults.** Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. – **Colossians 3:13; Rom 15:1-3**

HOW DO WE RESOLVE INDIVIDUAL CONFLICT?

**Matt 18:15-17; Lev 6:2-7; Deut. 17:6; 19:15;
Acts 6:1-3; 15:6-7**

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- **Go to the individual (not to others) to voice your concern - Matthew 18:15.** This is best done in love (**Ephesians 4:15**) and not to just get something off your chest. Accusing the person tends to encourage a defensiveness. Therefore, attack the problem rather than the person. This gives the person a better opportunity to clarify the situation or to seek forgiveness for the offense.

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- **If the first attempt does not accomplish the needed results, continue with another person or persons that can help with mediation (Matthew 18:16).** Remember that your goal is not to win an argument; it is to win your fellow believer to reconciliation. Therefore, choose people who can help you resolve the conflict.