

Resolving Conflict in the Body of Christ

1. The Priority of Unity in the Body of Christ

- 1 Corinthians 1:10: “no divisions among you”
- Philippians 4:2: “live in harmony in the Lord”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:13: “live in peace with one another”
(cf. Mark 9:50; 2 Cor 13:11; Rom 14:19; Heb 12:14)

2. The Preservation of Unity in the Body of Christ

“Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all *humility* and *gentleness*, with *patience*, showing *forbearance* for one another in *love*, ³ being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph 4:1b-3).

- Humility (cf. Phil 2:3-8) –
- Gentleness –
- Patience –
- Forbearance –
- Love (cf. 1 Cor 13:4-7) –

3. The Reality of Conflict in the Body of Christ

- James 4:1: “What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?”
- Galatians 5:15: “But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.”

WHEN CONFLICT STARTS TO ARISE:

- Contain your anger (Prov 15:18).
 - Control your mouth (Prov 18:13).
 - Contemplate your response (Prov 15:28).
 - Calm your brother (Prov 15:1).
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4. The Urgency of Reconciliation in the Body of Christ

“If you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering” (Matt 5:23-24; cf. Eph 4:26b-27).

- Whether you are the one who sinned (the *offender*) or the one who was sinned against (the *offendee*), the command of Jesus is the same:
 - The Offender: “Go” and be reconciled to your brother! (Matt 5:23-24)
 - The Offendee: “Go” and win your brother! (Matt 18:15)

KEY COMPONENTS OF BIBLICAL RECONCILIATION

1. The Graciousness to Confront Sin without Hostility (Luke 17:3a)

- Preceded by Self-Examination and Repentance (Matt 7:3-5)
- Motivated by Love and Compassion (2 Cor 2:4)
- Communicated with Gentleness and Humility (Gal 6:1)

2. The Humility to Confess Sin without Qualification (Luke 17:3b)

“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion” (Prov 28:13).

Components of Confession:

- Acknowledging Guilt
 - Expressing Remorse
 - Seeking Forgiveness
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➤ Common Alternatives to Genuine Confession:

Make Excuses	Play the “You-Do-It-Too” Card
Blame Your Circumstances	Downplay Your Culpability
Scrutinize the Process	Downplay the Sinfulness of Your Sin
Blame the Other Person	Use “I’m Sorry” as a Magic Wand

3. The Mercy to Forgive Sin without Reservation (Luke 17:3c)

“All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” (Eph 4:31-32; cf. Col 3:12-13; Mark 11:25).

Root Concept of Forgiveness:

- “to cancel a debt”
 - “to release from an obligation”
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WHEN GOD FORGIVES OUR SIN:

- He cancels our debt (Col 2:14).
- He pardons our iniquities (Ps 103:3).
- He wipes away our sins (Acts 3:19).
- He treads them underfoot (Mic 7:19).
- He remembers them no more (Jer 31:34).
- He throws them behind His back (Isa 38:17).
- He casts them into the depths of the sea (Mic 7:19).
- He removes them as far as the east is from the west (Ps 103:12).

Matthew 18:33: “Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?”