



November 2016

Dear friends,

Over the years, watching families in conflict, I have come to believe that many Christians have never been taught healthy ways to heal conflict.

The word conflict can be a noun and a verb. It is used to describe a regional battle between nations as in 'the Korean Conflict' or a person having inner conflict when struggling over decision making. In my work, the best definition is an active disagreement, often protracted, between people with opposing opinions, principles or, behaviors. Conflict is a natural part of life, but unfortunately many people have no idea how to deal with conflict in an effective way, that brings resolution, peace, and honors God.

As Christians we should be the best people on Earth at working toward reconciliation, but we often fail miserably.

A working definition of reconciliation is to cause two or more people or groups to become friendly again after an argument or disagreement. This sounds so simple but it is not!

The New Testament has a lot to say about reconciliation. In Romans 5 it says while we were still enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. II Corinthians 5 declares because we have been reconciled to God we are given the ministry of reconciliation and entrusted with the message of reconciliation. Matthew chapter 5 and 18 encourage us to be reconciled to others. Chapter 5 says go and be reconciled if you have offended someone and chapter 8 encourages us go try to heal things when we are the one hurt. A major part of successful reconciliation is to be a dedicated forgiver as is mentioned in

*Ephesians 4:32: "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."*

Then we are capable of applying

*1 Peter 3:7-18: "Let him seek peace and pursue it."*

*1 Peter 3:10: "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit"*

*1 Peter 3:11: "let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it."*

As we approach the holidays my prayer is for you to have a holy, healthy, happy time where successful healing of family conflict will be the best gift given and received. If you are the truly wonderful family with no conflict then please give the gift of prayer for those who struggle with family gatherings.

Please pray for Alpha as we minister to those who seek healing. Richard

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