



Resolving Conflict – 3rd party



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■ Conflict is inevitable.

- As long as we live in a sinful world, we will live with conflict.

■ Unresolved conflict destroys our unity.

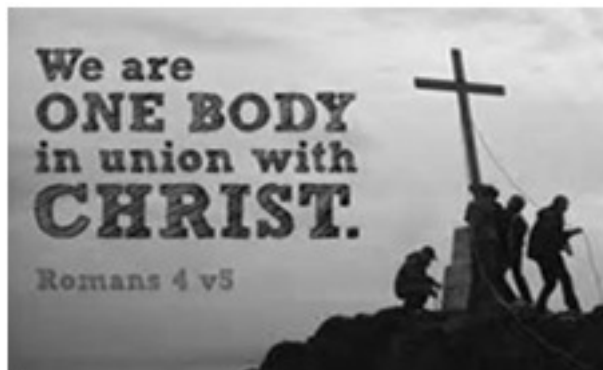
- It saps our energy. And it takes us away from our real task, which is to be about the work of God and not fighting with each other.

■ Conflict in the Body of Christ must be addressed. But how do we do it?



■ The goal of conflict resolution is unity, and unity in the church poses a threat to the devil who will use every opportunity to take advantage of unresolved issues, especially those involving anger, bitterness, self-pity and envy.

"let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from [us], along with all malice"
(Ephesians 4:31).



Every letter in the New Testament contains at least one command to live at peace with one another.

- 1. We are repeatedly instructed to love one another (John 13:34; Romans 12:10),
- 2. Live in peace and harmony with one another (Romans 15:5; Hebrews 12:14),
- 3. Settle our differences among ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:11),
- 4. Be patient, kind and tenderhearted toward one another (1 Corinthians 13:4),
- 5. Consider others before ourselves (Philippians 2:3).

■ How many times can I forgive:



*³ Take heed to yourselves: If your brother trespass against you rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.
⁴ And if he trespass against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to you, saying, I repent; you shall forgive him. (Luke 17: 3-4)*

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus gives the steps for dealing with a sinning brother. we are to address it one-on-one first, then if still unresolved it should be taken to a small group, and finally before the whole church if the problem still remains.

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

The reason conflict resolution is so difficult is:

- hesitant to place ourselves in uncomfortable situations.
- Frequently unwilling to humble ourselves enough to admit that we might be wrong.



When is 3rd party needed to resolve conflict?

In a conflict situation, A structure, in the form of ground rules and processes, is necessary to advance the chaotic, angry battles to calmer, more rational encounters.

- Third party intervention defined
- When to bring in a third party
- Who is a qualified third party
- How the third party works
- The Priest as a Mediator



■ **Third party intervention defined**

- Independent/neutral player in conflict process
- Third party has no vested interest in the conflict/resolution.
- The third party must agree to remain neutral during the conflict resolution process.
- Intended to move parties through an understanding of the problem, generation of options, and agreement on a solution.



When to bring in a third party

- Note: Two parties who simply disagree about a matter and feel comfortable talking with one another, able to work together to resolve it have no need of third party intervention as it undoubtedly cause more conflict than it solved.
 - Unable to communicate with each other.
 - At a deadlock situation with no end in sight.
 - Level of Trust is so low that communication is useless.

To Summarize: When situation seems hopeless, no way to reconcile, Relationship is being damaged and broken. A 3rd party is needed to mend.

Who is Qualified

1. One who has some training and, hopefully, experience in facilitating conflict resolution.
2. know where the pitfalls are, what to do when people refuse to play by the rules.
3. Adjusts the process to accommodate the specific needs of the various parties.
4. must be comfortable dealing with dysfunctional behavior.



Who is Qualified

Note: The third party should also be confident in his or her ability to structure and facilitate a resolution process. The third party's credibility in the eyes of the participants gives hope to all



How the third party works

- must work to reduce the tension and raise the level of trust among the individuals:



- A. The third party will need to allow individuals time to vent their feelings.



- B. Individuals also need to know that someone actually cares.

How the third party works

- establish some processes for working through the conflict
 - Issues must be defined, clarified, and related to one another.
 - Each side must gain an understanding of the other person's perspective on the issues.
- The third party must then move the group into a problem solving process.



Solving Process

- Techniques must be introduced for surfacing the facts, breaking down a problem, examining patterns as opposed to one-time incidents
- Generating options or solutions prior to gaining agreement on them.
- Finally, the third party should have a plan for gaining consensus for and commitment to the agreement by all parties.



Advise for 3rd Party

- **Make sure that good relationships are the first priority:**
- **Keep people and problems separate:**
- **Pay attention to the interests that are being presented:**
- **Listen first; talk second:**
- **Set out the "Facts":**
- **Explore options together:**

Steps

- **Step One: Set the date/time/Scene**
- **Step Two: Gather Information**
- **Step Three: Agree the Problem**
- **Step Four: Brainstorm Possible Solutions**
- **Step Five: Negotiate a Solution**

Summary

- Conflict resolution in the body of Christ is crucial for several reasons. Avoidance of conflict, with no effort to resolve it, will always increase and have negative effects on relationships within the body.
- The goal of conflict resolution is unity in home and church. This poses a threat to the devil who will use every opportunity to take advantage of unresolved issues, especially those involving anger, bitterness, self-pity and envy.