

Resolving Conflict with Godly Communication

Intro.

At just a year and a half, Emily was diagnosed with a massive abdominal tumor and endured numerous surgeries and rigorous chemotherapy before finally being declared cancer-free. But just to be sure, doctors encouraged Chris and his wife to continue with Emily's last scheduled chemotherapy session, a three-day treatment that would begin on her second birthday.

On the morning of her final day of treatment, a pharmacy technician prepared the intravenous bag, filling it with more than 20 times the recommended dose of sodium chloride. Within hours Emily was dead. A recent Johns Hopkins study claims more than 250,000 people in the U.S. die every year from medical errors. Other reports claim the numbers to be as high as 440,000.

The medical field in recent years has gone to great lengths, implementing procedures and laws to protect patients from malpractice errors and medical mistakes. They know to not do so has resulted in thousands of deaths. The bible says we should be just as careful with how we talk to those when dealing with a conflict.

When we confront others, we are performing relational surgery which can have devastating effects. Words can be either a sword or a scalpel. They can hurt or heal.

Prov. 12:18 -says - There *is one who **speaks rashly** like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings **healing**.*

Proverbs 15:4 says, - A *soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it **crushes the spirit**.*

Here are some of God's rules for dealing with conflict.

1. **Don't deal with conflict the wrong way.** Don't commit relational malpractice by:
 - a. **Blowing up. Attacking** – focused on blaming the other person. This approach is 'peace-breaking'. It verbally assaults – criticism, nagging, slander, angry words threats.
 - i. **This approach can lead the other person to escalating.** Proverbs says to abandon this approach for it only leads to escalation of hostility (Proverbs. 17:14 *The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.*)
 - ii. **This approach can also lead the other person to isolating** from you emotionally or physically. Proverbs 21:19 *It is Better to live in a **desert** than with a quarrelsome and nagging wife*
 - b. **Clamming up – escaping. Focus is on ME Looking for what is easy, convenient way to avoid the conflict.** Don't like confrontation, more concerned about appearances than reality. These are 'Peace fakers' – **Often Denial or minimizing of the problem; They escape to work**, hobbies, self-interest to get away from the conflict. Ultimately, they view suicide as a viable means of escape.
 - c. Counterattack or Defensive. James 1:19-21
 - d. Deflect away from themselves.
2. **Get a loving heart. Proverbs 1:26; 4:23**
 - a. Illustration: trying to stop the symptoms of quarreling, conflict without removing the sinful heart is like trying to eliminate the symptoms of cancer without removing the tumor.
 - b. **Matt. 7:1-5.**

- i. Imagine a Dr. attempting eye surgery with a 2x4 piece of wood glued to his eyes!
Jesus says we **MUST FIRST REMOVE** the beam in our eye **BEFORE** attempting to remove the speck in others eyes.

3. How to get a loving heart.

- a. Receive Christ as Lord and Savior. He then indwells by the Holy Spirit who allows us to experience the love of Christ! Romans 5:5; John 15:10; Galatians 5:22-24
- b. Rejoice in Christ's love, peace and forgiveness: Colossians 3:12-17
- c. Learn and be encouraged in God's **word** through His people. Col. 3:16
- d. **Worship together.** Col. 3:16
- e. Live to glorify Christ and give thanks. Col. 3:17

4. Think biblically before speaking

- a. Prov. 15:28. The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.
- b. Prov. 29:20. *Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*
- c. **Speak at the right time** Prov. 28:14. He *who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be reckoned a curse to him.*

5. Speak with loving words. Prov. 15:1. Soft, tender, non-combative,

- a. Prov. 15:1. *A soft answer turns away rage; but a harsh word stirs up anger.*
- b. Prov. 16:23 - *The heart of the wise instructs his mouth and adds persuasiveness to his lips*
- c. Matthew 7:12 *Treat people the same way you want them to treat you.*
- d. Eph. 4:29 *Speak so as to build up and give grace (help) to the hearer according to the need of the moment.*

6. Speak with humble words.

- a. Ask the other person's forgiveness. Understand and acknowledge specifically how you have hurt them.
- b. James 5:16. Confess your sins to one another.
- c. Ephesians 5:21. Submit yourselves to one another.
- d. James 1:19-20. **Be quick** (eager, attentive) **to hear** (understand their heart), **and slow to speak.**

7. Listening words. It is loving to do this. James 1; Prov., 18:13

- a. Prov. 18:13
- b. Illustration: Don't be listening to talk but to understand. Change the setting of your radar to understanding their heart.
- c. 1 Peter 3:7. Husbands are commanded to understand the heart of their wife.
- d. Prov. 20:5: The heart of a person is like a deep well. Wise is he who can draw it out.
- e. James 1:19-20
- f. Don't draw premature conclusions or assume motives. Prov. 18:13; 1 Cor. 4:5
- g. Don't listen simply to interject what you want to say. Prov. 18:2.
- h. Don't focus on talking about yourself. Ja.1:19-20
- i. Don't get angry or defensive. James 1:20-21
- j. Not rehearsing others sins or flaws. Prov. 17:9. It is loving.

8. Truthful confronting words in love. Ephesians 4:15 **Speak the truth in love.**

Prov. 27:6 Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

