

Getting to the Heart of Conflict

Conflict is a normal part of human relationships. Conflict can stem from all sorts of places including misunderstandings, competing values, differences of opinion, selfish desires, or sinful behaviors. Wherever conflict comes from, the way we navigate through the conflict can determine whether the relationships involved will move toward more pain and separation or toward healing and reconciliation.

Jesus has a lot to say about how we relate to one another, and he gives some clear instructions about how his followers are to address conflict. For followers of Jesus, it's vital to begin by inspecting what is going on inside of us before we move to address what might be going on inside of another (Matthew 7:1-5).

Use the series of prompts below to help identify what might be going on within your own heart in a particular area of conflict. Prayerfully reflecting on these insights can help you approach a challenging area of conflict in a way that reflects the love, truth, humility, and grace that Jesus has modeled and instructed for His disciples.

The following tool is an adaptation of "The Ladder of Integrity" from Emotionally Healthy Relationships, by Pete and Geri Scazzero. Learn more at emotionallyhealthy.org

QUESTIONS TO GET TO THE HEART OF CONFLICT

What is
going on
inside of me
(1-4)

1. Right now the issue on my mind is... (I'm anxious in talking about this because...)
2. My part in this is...
3. My desire in this issue is...
4. My feelings about this are... (What my reaction tells me about me is...)

What I value
(5-8)

5. This issue is important to me because I value...and I violate that value when...
6. I am willing/not willing to...
7. One thing I could do to improve the situation is...
8. The most important thing I want you to know is...

What I hope
(9-10)

9. I think my honest sharing will benefit our relationship by...
10. I hope and look forward to...