

You Hurt Me, Now What

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and unity in resolving conflicts and cultivating spiritual growth.

Duration: 59:47

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:18

Topics: "Conflict Resolution", "Humility"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the challenges of conflict and pride within the church, emphasizing that while hurt can accompany growth, it is essential to confront pride and seek humility. He explains that divisions in a healthy church can reveal spiritual maturity and encourages believers to handle conflict with grace and understanding. Idleman highlights the importance of taking thoughts captive, embracing grace, and recognizing that some relationships may never mend, urging the congregation to focus on their own spiritual growth and responses. Ultimately, he calls for humility and the willingness to forgive, reminding everyone that the message of the cross is both powerful and offensive to those who resist it.

Transcript

I've received that many correspondences of people just being helped by God's Word, and sometimes it hurts to get help. When they remove that cancer tumor, it doesn't feel real good, or that root canal, or that pride. If you ask for humility and your pride is going to be crushed, it's going to hurt.

Can I get a witness? 9 a.m.? Okay. There's either a lot of humble people here, or a lot of prideful people. I'm not sure yet what that is.

And you need to know, we all struggle with pride. Nobody's immune to that. And I love, many times over the years, I've talked to people and just, and I've said, hey, there's a prideful, critical heart here.

They go, well, you're prideful. I'm like, well, yeah, but that's not the right time to discuss it because that means you're deflecting the pride in your own heart. And when we're prideful, we like to deflect and make excuses and blame the other person.

And that's why it's stiff-necked. And so, we're going to try to humble some people this morning. Part two, you hurt me, now what? Part two, 1 Corinthians 11, a powerful reminder for all of us, 18 through 19, when you come together as a church, now this is amazing.

The Bible actually tells us that there is going to be division in the church. It doesn't promote it, doesn't encourage it, but it says there will be division in a healthy church. Why? Because in a healthy church, we're trying to grow, and there's growing pains.

In a healthy church, there's the demonic realm working overtime, planting seeds of division, planting seeds of discord. And then not everyone in the church is a united, Spirit-filled believer. And I've seen statistics out there, and it's pretty close, but if Jesus had one out of 12 devils, you know, a church of a thousand, there might be a hundred people who are not on your side.

And so, there will be disunity in a healthy, living church. And so, Paul said, I hear that there are divisions among you, and I believe it in part, for there must be factions, divisions, contentions. There must be that among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

So, if somebody is, if there's a group of people, you're Spirit-filled believers, you're wanting to live out God's Word, and you're wanting to grow in humility, and there's others who don't, there's going to be friction. You want to honor God, others don't. You want to worship, others don't.

It's that bickering and complaining that in the church, there's divisions to show who is really of God. And that's what division can do. It can really show you who is mature in the faith, who really wants to grow, who is filled with the Spirit, who is erring on the side of grace, and it will show you those who are divisive and immature.

This is actually one of the best ways you can expose the wolf in sheep's clothing as well, because of division in the church. And it points out, okay, there's a division. Who's on God's side? Who's on God's side? And I remember, I think it was Ronald Reagan, when they're debating Republican, Democrat, and he goes, I just want to know what side God is on.

That's what side I want to be on. And so that's in the church, we want to be on God's side. And anytime you're fighting for unity, you're contending for unity, there will be division.

And it proves who is who. And how you handle that conflict says a lot. Church, always remember this.

How you handle conflict reveals a lot about your spiritual maturity. Do we throw a fit and get upset and go on angry tirades and try to defend ourselves and get them back and hold in a spirit of bitterness? Or do we own it, work on it, grow together? And I think one of the biggest indications of spiritual maturity is how a person handles conflict. One of the biggest indicators of spiritual maturity, or lack of it, I should say, is how they handle conflict.

And the irony is, over the years I've seen those who are spiritually mature, want God's will for their life, fill up the spirit, they're actually okay with conflict and talking through things and working it out and getting stronger. Those who are immature and don't like it, they don't like conflict because they don't want to be exposed. Remember, truth invites scrutiny.

Let's talk about it. Error runs from it. And so a person who's always avoiding conflict... Now, anybody out there who's not a person of conflict, you don't like it? I think most of us don't like it.

So we shouldn't run to it. We shouldn't look forward to it. We shouldn't be, you know, just can't wait for conflict.

But when it comes, and that's what I talked about last week, you need to listen to last week's message really as well, because it was the twin to this message. It sets the stage for, if you're going to grow spiritually, there's going to be conflict. If you're going to mature, there's going to be conflict.

There's just no way around it. And I wish there was. Amen? It was one of the biggest lessons I ever learned being a pastor.

Because you think, you know, most church planters think they're going to do it the right way. I'm going to do it the right way. And you realize that there's no right way, only God's way.

And hey, the way we do it, there can be not much conflict. Yes, there is a lot of conflict. The core group we started with, most of them were gone in six months.

Often because they were hurt. They were offended. One group, I remember they thought they were going to be the worship team, and they weren't the worship team.

They weren't really that gifted, and that hurt them. Another group wanted us to not hire or not have a youth pastor, because they think all the kids should always be in the church. It's called the Family Integrated Church Movement.

A lot of wisdom in some of that. We have our kids, actually our young adults in here. We don't offer teen studies on Sundays.

They have it on Wednesdays, so they can actually be in the service. But it was such a point of contention. Oh, you got to watch this Votie Bachmann sermon.

Okay, I've seen 15 of them. What do you want me to do? That's how they do their church. That's great for them, but God might have us doing something a little bit different.

And contention and contention. That's how you know when the enemy likes you bickering, complaining over the little things. We would actually get in heated discussions, not to you, but because I wasn't making a lot of announcements.

And so I said, okay, let's try it one Sunday. And I'll never remember. Her name was Chelsea, and she's just singing.

I don't remember what it was. Some about the Holy Spirit, and it was just a powerful worship song. People are just engaged, and then we turn on the lights, sit down.

Now let's have 10 minutes of announcements. The men's potluck that is coming up is next week, and the women's tea is this. It's like, we just killed that environment.

And so see, conflict. But that's how we did it in our old church. Okay, that's good.

But is this something we really need to argue over? And I'm just opening up because that's church life. How we used to do things. And that's what you really know when you're in trouble.

Well, that's not how we used to do it. Or that's not how this was such and such church. Or when I was growing up, that's not how we used to do it.

And we don't have it too much. But early on, especially coming up here, the biggest battles were what they would call the worship wars. You know where I'm going with this? Old hymns or contemporary.

And boy, it's a battle. The reason is preference. Preference.

If you were used to the old hymns growing up, and it really resonates with you, like when you hear the Star Spangled Banner or something, I mean, something just, you know, patriotic, but you could hear those. And that's when I came to the Lord. That's when I walked that sawdust trail.

Billy Graham used to have those revivals and old rugged cross. And you can relate where some of us, others came up with contemporary songs drawing us back to the Lord. And both sets are good if they're grounded in God's word.

Because remember, the old hymns used to be new hymns when they were first written. And I remember reading Charles Wesley's biography and Martin Luther when he would try to bring new songs into the church. We sing them now.

Mighty is our fortress, I believe. But when that was first introduced, it's like, oh, we got to go back. So see, it's always been that throughout the ages.

And the enemy loves that kind of division because the Spirit of God is not there. If you're always fighting and dividing and arguing over all these things. So what I didn't get to last week is what I want to share with you this morning.

The first thing you have to do is grab the hammer of humility. And what do you do with a hammer? So hit yourself right here. Grab the hammer of humility.

Pride has to be crushed with a sledge hammer, not caressed with a feather. Pain, pain, pain equals what? Yes. Pain, pain, pain.

And it's hard. It's really hard for a conflict to flourish when both people are humble. How does it work? What soil does it grow in? How can you have an argument? We're like, you know what? You're right.

Great point. Let's move forward. Let's be united.

Let's not let this divide us versus stiff necked. My way, this way. I don't want to do it that way.

I'm feeling threatened. And pride comes up in all of us. And we have to just let the hammer of humility crush it.

And there's a verse. Oh yeah, here it is. God encourages us to humble ourselves.

But the verse I didn't put was when it says, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that in due time, he will exalt you. Exalt yourself and he will humble you. Let me tell you, it's much, much better to humble yourself.

Amen. Humble yourself because God, the way he humbles you is he embarrasses you. He exposes you.

Humble yourself. Take the lower road. And it's challenging.

I've been in discussions where I know I was right. I know I could have drove a point home. I know I could just, bam, slammed it.

But for the sake of unity, say, hey, you know what? Let's just start afresh. We don't need to rehash that. Let's just both move forward on this point, knowing we love each other, be united, and just let that go.

Love doesn't keep any record wrong done against it. Always hopes, always perseveres, always trusts. And you start afresh.

But internally, I'm not wanting to say those things. What's happening internally? My defense attorney and within. But Shane, let them have it.

You know you're right. You need to prove yourself. You need to show them.

You need to get the last word in. Any last worders out there? If you're not honest, I can point you out because I know who those last worders are. Right? The conversation's over.

Oh, pastor, by the way, when you said such and such, isn't it funny? We all grow together. We all mature together if we're willing. One thing about this area is you will grow, you will mature, you will become stronger if you open yourself up to God transforming you.

It happens. I look back at my life and I'm like, oh, I'm glad God waited till I was 40 to plant a church. I would have hurt a lot of people in my 20s.

You know, I remember, you remember those, um, what they call where your mouse sits on? Mouse pad. Okay. Mouse pad.

But it said, I'll still remember this big mean Steelers football player and said, in life, you're either the pavement or you're the steamroller. And I chose to be, guess what? Yeah. And that was my motto.

And I would tell people in life, stop crying. In life, you're either the pavement or you're the steamroller. That's not true, right? You can, you can be a mixture of both.

You can drive the steamroller and then decide what needs to be crushed, what needs to be smoothed out. God encourages us to humble ourselves and use gentle words to turn away wrath. That is so powerful.

The power of the gentle word, because as a fire is brewing, you can throw gas on that fire by your words. Husbands, or you can throw water on the fire, humble yourself and be gentle. In doing so we receive God's grace rather than his resistance.

Resistance. Again, we can all see when a conversation isn't going well. Have you been there? And when they're saying things, it's like, Oh, I feel the fire burning.

I feel, and I'm going to let them have it. That's the time to take those thoughts captive. And you can also learn from the person, even if they're wrong.

Even if the person is wrong, there's something you can learn from them. I told someone just this week, we thought if somebody, they were in the wrong, let's say, but you know, even, even a donkey spoke to Balaam. If God's getting us to, getting to wake us up, we have to listen to those we might not agree with.

And then of course, the obvious, stop the stinking thinking. Stop the, boy, if we could just take our thoughts captive, think about that. Not every thought you have is a good thought.

You have to sift it through the filter of God's word. The enemy can also shoot fiery darts into your mind. The Bible talks about avoiding the fiery darts of the enemy.

And it gives the image, Paul actually gives an image of putting on the whole armor of God. So you have a shield of faith and the breastplate of righteousness. You have all these different things, but it talks about the fiery darts of the enemy.

And to date, I've never been hit with an actual fiery dart. Physical, ow, that hurt. The devil got me again.

Where do they come? And so you have your own thoughts. The rebel within is wanting you to defend yourself. And how dare they? And then you have the enemy fueling the fire.

Do you know why the fire is on the dart? What they would do is dip the arrows into some type of oil tar. They would light it on fire, and then they would shoot maybe a house or something, or something with a lot of wood, and it would ignite. And so that's a perfect picture there.

The fiery dart just ignites, stirs the pot. Right? Have you seen that stir? I'm not cabbage patching. That would look funny if I did, wouldn't it? The cabbage patch.

Remember that? Kids are like, what is that? Cabbage patch was a dance in the 1990s. And you were stirring the pot. How did I think of that? I didn't even think of cabbage patch in the first service.

So let's say you're stirring the pot, the enemy's stirring the pot, fueling the flames of hatred and discord. And I believe the thoughts is a thought from Godism. My own thought is a thought from the enemy.

I don't know exactly how it works, but the brain, if you study, the study like the brain, like the people who actually study the brain, and you read their writings, it's amazing how much the brain can comprehend and neurotransmitters, and how they send messages in the subconscious. And it's just amazing. And somehow our brain, do you know something? Do you ever have something? It's not that real, really a big of a deal, but by the end of the day, it's a real big deal.

What happened? Who fueled that fire? Well, I'm so mad. By the end of the day, you're fuming. Come on, 11 a.m., you got to be more honest.

And 9 a.m. was not very honest on this point. It's like I had a holy group of Billy Grahams, and I'm the only one up here being transparent. But by the end of the day, you are fuming.

It's those fiery darts. So you have to take those thoughts captive and saying, this is not good. It's not godly.

It's not productive. Lord, and if you take that thought captive, you can actually quench and put out those fiery darts. That's how that works.

And many of our thoughts are not good for that very reason and definitely not godly. And then in addition to that, I believe this is how the enemy, when the Bible talks about avoiding the fiery darts or blocking the fiery darts of the enemy, I've never been hit by a physical fiery dart, but I've been hit by a lot of mental fiery darts. Here's exactly what happens.

You're already ticked off because of the flesh of pride. You know, it's just anybody keeps talking, you just keep getting more upset. And then here comes a fiery darts.

The enemy says, I see my opportunity. Bam. And then it just fuels fiery darts, fuels the flame that's already going in the mind.

And that's how most people, things are getting misconstrued or misinterpreted or misunderstood. It's because those, those fiery darts and the devil, I believe those thoughts will tell you what is not true. He is the father of lies.

He is, that's his, his nature, that the word, one of the words for devil is liar, deceiver. And so you're already thinking or feeling a certain way. And then he throws fuel onto the fire.

And now you're really worked up. Now you're really blazing. And that's how he works.

That's how he causes division in the church. And it's sad to see. And that's why, even though it's hard, it's good to talk through things.

Anybody ever pray, Lord, you just fix this. I don't ever want to talk about it. How many of us understand that doesn't usually work? That's like the doctor saying, Shane, you got some cancer growing, but let's just leave it alone.

Hope it goes away. We can remove it right now. No, that's okay.

I'm sure it'll just go away. Same thing, cancer of the soul. And it keeps eating at us and eating.

Now there are some things to just let go. I'm going to get to that hopefully in a minute. So I've got some things that will help in order to do this.

We must take every thought captive every day, sometimes every second. What does that look like? Okay, let's say I'm offended by somebody or I'm hurt by somebody. You know what, Lord? I'm not going to let this ruin my day.

I'm not going to react to them. And this helps me a lot. Anybody not good in traffic when they're in a hurry? Okay, good.

Not just me. And that's why I never put a radio station bumper sticker on my truck. I don't put anything on my truck to know I'm a Christian.

Pray for me. But I'll say, Lord, maybe they're in a hurry. Maybe they got to get to the hospital.

Well, Shane, that's lying. Not necessarily. I don't know.

Maybe there's a baby at home. Who knows why they're in a hurry? And if I take my thoughts captive versus that young jerk, I'm going to teach him a lesson. Let me get right on his tail, too.

Taking the thoughts captive. Somebody says something. Do you take that wrong or do you take the thought captive? Well, I'm sure they didn't mean that.

You see how easy that is? You can tilt the scale really quick in the right or wrong direction. In these key moments, ask yourself, you ready for this one? Drumroll. Is what I'm thinking true and godly? And then

number three, am I letting anger and pride influence me? Do you know that most marital conflicts are because of pride and not getting our way? Not doing things the way we want it to go or spending? Finance is one of the top marriage issues.

Because how they want to spend it is not how you want to spend it. Or what they want to do for a certain date or something is not what you want to do. I mean, there's a plethora of examples.

And so ask, is what I'm thinking, is it true and godly? Because as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. And then am I letting anger and pride influence me? Because if somebody says something, it hurts my pride. And then now I react.

So am I just letting my pride? Because when anytime people offer constructive criticism, pride usually rises up. Right? The defense attorney within who doesn't sleep, doesn't slumber. He wants to he wants to excuse you.

Listen, your honor, my client. And he'll just make lots of excuses for you. The defense attorney within.

Am I letting pride influence me? Number four, what does the bible say about this situation? And how should I handle it from a biblical perspective? Five, ask, is this really something I need to address? Or am I mad because my pride has been hurt? Or am I convicted? I talked about that last last Sunday, the top 10 sermon principles that convict people that I give. And I've seen over the years, so many people, we sit down and they talk and they're upset. I'm like, oh, you're convicted.

That's it. We can't fix that. I can't shut up.

Conviction. And when we're convicted, we don't want to hear it. What do we do? Gotta shoot the messenger.

Same within your own family sometimes. And remember, this is so important. The faults in others I can easily see, but praise God, there's none in me.

That is pride, pride, pride. And then the next point, embrace the gift of grace. Isn't grace a gift? Grace is a gift.

First Corinthians 13. Anytime we say we love something, I love a nut burger or I love chocolate, we often have a skewed definition of love. Here's the real biblical definition of love.

Love is patient. It's kind. It doesn't envy.

It doesn't boast. It's not proud. It does not dishonor others.

It's not self-seeking. It's not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. And if we're acting like that and erring on the side of grace, conflict is much, much easier.

It doesn't mean you don't do anything. It doesn't mean you're the pavement and somebody else is a steamroller. It just means you're not going to let pride get under your skin.

And here's the wonderful thing is love brings joy. Are you missing joy in your life? Apply this verse. I don't know exactly how it works spiritually speaking, but when I'm applying God's word and love is patient and kind and doesn't envy, it doesn't boast, it's not proud, it's not rude, it's not self-seeking, it keeps no record of wrong done against it.

And when I'm doing these things, joy is the outflow. Yes, I'm going through a conflict or a challenge, but there's joy. Joy unspeakable because I'm applying the word of God.

But when I'm impatient, unkind, unloving, jealous, boasting, and putting down others, I'm walking around disgruntled. Do you ever know those people? They're always disgruntled. I don't even want to talk to them on the phone.

I don't want to run into them. Oh, woe is me. The housing market and the economy and the fuel prices and this.

Oh, every single time we talk. Judgmental Jerry, get a heart transplant by the word of God and just be filled with love. See, it doesn't excuse these things, but you've got to bring some love and joy into your heart by applying the scripture.

Forgiveness removes an unhealthy burden that you're carrying. That's the thing we forget about unforgiveness. You think I'm getting them back.

You're not getting anybody back. You're carrying an unhealthy, toxic burden by not forgiving and moving forward and being hurt. So when you're hurt, the key to when I'm hurt, I'm removing that hurt.

I might still be there calling my name, knocking on the door, but I'm just going to relieve myself of this burden. I'm going to forgive and I'm going to move forward. You might get hurt again, but see, you don't keep that burden because unforgiveness, what it does, it begins to fester in your heart and your heart becomes hard and critical and condescending.

And we have to lay that down at the foot of the cross. But we might say they don't deserve it. Exactly.

They don't deserve my forgiveness. They don't. Exactly.

We didn't deserve the love of God. We didn't deserve God's grace, God, Jesus's grace on our life. Exactly.

That's why we do it. Not because someone deserves it. And don't let preference cause division or misunderstandings build bitterness.

So what I try to do is if it's something kind of minimal, you let it go. Just say, Lord, just because you don't know if it's your mind trying to, you know, the enemy fiery darts, because the enemy will keep something alive as well. Fiery darts, this.

But if God puts something on your heart, like, I really need to talk about this. I really need to talk about this. There's wisdom in talking about it.

But sometimes you just let it go. Or when you talk about it, you clear the air so that way the misunderstandings are dealt with. You see where they're coming from.

One of the best things you can do is see where someone is coming from. And they hear where you're coming from. And I've been at a lot of meetings pastoring over the years.

A lot of meetings. A lot of meetings. And it's funny to hear how a person felt, even though it wasn't meant that way.

Why perceived it as this. I felt it this way. And the other person, well, no, that's, this is how I felt.

And so you clear up the misunderstandings in the air. Now somebody could be totally, you know, not being honest with you. That's, that's going to happen from time to time.

But also this one is so important. I touched base on it last week. Don't let preference cause division.

Do you know that's where a lot of division comes from? I prefer. I prefer this. I prefer that.

I don't prefer you do that. My preference is this. And then we get, you know, our little pity parties going.

And the gossiping and the slandering. Often over preference. Because think about it.

In a Bible-believing church, many people aren't leaving because, oh, that church has drifted from the truth. That's a no-brainer. What do most people leave for? I've been hurt.

I've been offended. Preference. And it's causing a lot of pain.

And it doesn't need to. We all prefer things a different way. A seek peace, but not capitulation.

Do you know what the difference is? A.W. Tozer was really famous for saying something like, God loves peacemakers, but not religious negotiators. And a lot of times in the church, we think, oh, just be at peace with all men. Just be at peace.

But if they're divided over the truth, I can't be at peace with them. How am I supposed to fellowship with them or go to church together? And they're rejecting God. They're following a false God.

And so it's not peace at any cost. That's not biblical. Biblical is not peace at any cost.

True unity in the church is unity of faith, unity of doctrine, unity of core beliefs and the essentials. We're all united around that. And so when somebody's departed from that, it's hard to be at peace with them.

Now, you can be at peace, you know, if they're your neighbor, mow their lawn, pick up their trash. I mean, of course. But when it comes to worshiping God, Romans 12, 18, if it is possible, maybe this is for someone this morning, if it is possible, that tells me sometimes it's not possible.

Anybody out there who likes to force reconciliation? Or just me? Four people? Oh, now we're getting honest. No, you want to, there's a lot of hands that need to go up. Let's be honest.

You try to push reconciliation. You try to, come on, let's get together. Come on, we got to make this work.

We got to fix this. Come on, come on, come on. And you're phoning, you're texting, you're sending flowers, spouses.

If it's possible, as much as it depends upon, in other words, do what you can do, but then let it go. Because God looks at you and what you're doing. He doesn't hold you accountable for the actions of

another person.

And this has helped me over the years so many times. If it's possible, as much as depends upon you, live peaceably with all men. And I'm gonna throw out some numbers here.

I'm not exaggerating. I would say nine out of ten people, let's say, who leave this church, they leave all churches. I have no clue why they left.

Not even a hint of why. And sometimes, well, I was treated wrong in children's ministry. I was treated wrong in nursery.

Or you said this from the pulpit. Or Pastor Abram didn't call me back. Or Levy didn't call my references.

The usher, Ron won't use me. This person was rude to me. That's not reasons to leave a church.

That reveals a prideful heart. And so what we try to do is, hey, and I've even called people, hey, sorry if there's any misunderstandings. Haven't seen you in months.

Let us know. We'd love to apologize. Hardly ever, ever get a call back.

Now, some people, what I've seen over the years too, is once they're kind of drifting from God, maybe get back into the Las Vegas Christian lifestyle, you know, and maybe drifting from God. They don't want to hear from the church. You're not going to come to a Westside Christian fellowship if you're not ready to change.

That we know for sure. If you don't like to hear the truth, if you don't like conviction, you're going to avoid this like the plague. And so that might be why they leave.

I've reached out to people who left because of the music we choose sometimes. I guess a song might not come from the right location or right church, and then now we're going to leave the whole church. They're drifting.

No, it just might not be a song you prefer. But see, there's always more going on. Fiery darts, others are talking to them.

And so this has really helped me because as much as it depends upon me, the first couple of years, it was hard because you're like, why? You know what? We got to meet. We got to fix what's going on. But a lot of times you can't fix it.

You can throw it out there. And what's that old saying? I'll leave the ball in your court. Hey, I'd like to reconcile.

I'd like to make this work. But that's up to you. I can't do anymore.

So Paul said, as long as you've done what you can do, if it's possible, just do what you can do. Matthew 5, therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, meaning you're coming to church, you're coming to worship, and you remember that your brother has something against you, what do you do? You leave your gift. You leave the worship service.

I mean, there's so much applicability here. I don't know if that's a word, applicability. Sound again.

We'll look it up. So stop what you're doing. In other words, you know, I'm worshiping God.

I'm going through the motions. I'm going to church. Yeah, I know this person has this against me, but I don't care.

Say, go fix that first, because disunity will affect your worship. Anybody ever been there? You get to church, you're going to worship, and you're like, oh, what are they doing here? Why are they here? I hope they don't run into me or want to talk to me. And your whole worship service is ruined.

Or, you know, God's just on your heart, like call that person. Fix that situation. You're still coming to church.

Nope, nope, nope, nope, you can't get good worship in. You're strained. You don't feel that joy, because it's actually sin.

If God's convicting us to go and forgive someone, or at least, as much as it's up to me, reconcile, and I don't, it's going to prevent heartfelt worship. And I think that's going on in the church more than most people realize. And so it says here, go to them.

See, your responsibility. You go to them. Hey, if there's a conflict, I know there's some issues, let's talk about it.

Love to reconcile. They say, nope, guess what? You're off the hook. Now you can go worship with the right heart, because you did what you were called to do.

And I think it's interesting. We can get it, I mean, if we had time to go to Matthew 18, maybe later, but this is if you know someone has something against you. See, for a while, I thought that could be my, I could, that could be, if somebody had something against me, okay, that's their problem.

I could avoid it. But scripturally, it's hard if you know somebody has something against you. You have, you should go to them.

So anytime I hear, you know, because it gets around, right? You know, around it, you know, hey, somebody said that you kind of, you know, you hurt them this way, or you said something in your sermon. See, before you said that I was fine. Now I know, now I have to try to fix the situation.

And it's so many different areas. I mean, I wish, you know, I want to be careful too, because people listen and go, why did you use me in your sermon? Hey, I didn't mention names. I didn't mention situations.

I didn't mention dates. Conviction. But I use my, my, and Pastor Abe, we use examples of ourselves more than anybody else, how we own it, how we need to work on things.

But again, if it's possible, it's also not possible to pursue peace if we have to negotiate the absolute truth of God's word. Again, be peacemakers, but not capitulators. And you'll see, have you heard that the term, some of you know exactly what it means, some of you aren't too sure.

Woke, wokeness. Have you, have you been hearing that? Like Disney is going woke. It basically means we have to appease the small minority of people because they're crybabies.

And we have to upset everyone else, the vast majority of morality, and we go woke. In other words, it's basically oversensitive too. And they will, they will call you out over something you said 25 years ago.

They won't look in the mirror themselves, but they'll, and so that the whole woke culture, and President Biden, I don't remember her term, she just, they just appointed this lady, she's in charge of equity, meaning equality across the board. And so it doesn't matter, character or gifting, but we need this amount of, you know, gay and lesbian and bisexual and African-American and Hispanic, we need it, we need equal across the board. Woke.

Don't look at character, you look at wokeness. And being, basically it's another word, I think, for politically correct. Is that going to offend a certain, why is it they don't, they don't want to offend like 1% of the population, but they offend the other 99% of the population? Makes no sense.

Disney going woke, trying to relate to a certain sexual preference. And that's what that means. And so those things are worth spiritually fighting over.

Not physically, of course, but spiritually we fight for these things, we contend for the inclusion classes that they're teaching to little kids. And in California, they could be passing soon where a teenager can change their sex without parental consent. We have lost our mind.

We have lost the moral compass. And whenever you suppress the truth, God gives them over to a debased and corrupted mind. Read Romans 1 tonight.

Now this one is so important, the wisdom of using wisdom. What does that mean? Well, I'm glad you asked. Proverbs 4, 7, wisdom is the main thing we need to consider when making decisions.

And in Proverbs 4, you can read wisdom is the main thing. Wisdom is the principle thing. Therefore, get wisdom and all you're getting, get understanding.

She will exalt you. She will promote you. A lot of people, especially in the charismatic churches, I've noticed this.

They're more led of voices or internal promptings, what they call led of the spirit. And I believe in being led of the spirit. Let me tell you, we could tell stories, but you're not supposed to discount wisdom because wisdom, God has given us wisdom to make wise choices, wise choices.

For example, I feel led to buy a million dollar home, even though I can't afford it. God's made, I parked, my car broke down right in front of the one on the mountain. Is that a sign from God? I feel, I feel led of this.

Okay. Wisdom says, no, no, no, no, no. Funny story.

Sometimes I'll tell people that haven't been in my house before. I'll text him. I'll tell him.

All right. When you get to the gate at Quartz Hill mountain, you know, just enter this code. We're the very top house, 8,000 square feet.

You can park up by the six car garage, by the water tank. And they're like, does he live up there? So I let him think that for a little while. And then, uh, no, I don't.

So it's just, just a funny story. I've told people that no text pastor, Avery, does he really live up there? Where's our tithe going, man, but you use wisdom and it is a true balancing act, rushing into conflict, resolving conflict or waiting. That's where my tension is right there.

Do I rush into to resolving this or do I wait on the Lord? And I can tell you two things this month have fixed themselves by waiting on the Lord and not rushing. It's unbelievable. And God, I believe will show you, you know, I had to have, maybe have a hard conversation with a few people and this, Oh, Lord, I, I, I just need to know what you, Lord, would you, and then guess what? God did something there.

He fixed it, but sometimes he fixes it with our words and our, our godly confrontation. And then do we ignore it or do we address it? It is a two true balancing act, but I'm gonna give you some points that will help. Ask number one, can this wait? Can this wait as I search my own heart? Huh? Thank God for this principle.

I can't tell you how many times my wife said, well, just, just sleep on it tonight. Don't call him today. I'm right now.

I want to call him. No, just, just sleep on it. See how you feel in the morning.

And how many times when the morning comes like, Oh, I'm good. I'm good. I don't need to, that was no big deal because what we want, pride wants us to react.

Humility waits and we respond. And it's hard because of all of us who want the last word in. We want to thoroughly explain ourself.

Anybody relate? You guys leave me hanging this morning. I want to thoroughly explain myself and often just, okay, just wait, because here's what happens when you wait, you can calm down. You search your own heart and say, you know, I've got some pride in here I need to work on.

I shouldn't get offended over things like that. And then you can respond because you've weighed on the Lord. You come with the right heart.

One thing I can say, because people ask, a couple of people asked me this morning, how do you not get so upset at people when they just slam you? Because I can show you, there's Facebook pages dedicated to slamming me. They do little memes of me, bald head. He's got a, he's got a food disorder and like, okay, whatever.

He's not a scientist and he's talking about the earth. I'm like, whatever. You know, to me it's sad.

It's kind of funny. And I've been over the years, you know, people will, the person that the church pokes fun at the most or gossips the most at is usually the lead pastor. And I didn't know that when I first started the church.

I thought, oh, everybody's going to, you know, it's going to be great. And then so you eventually develop two inch thick skin like a rhinoceros. But it takes time of hurting and wounding and sandpaper and calluses.

And then you're able, now I see why God's, you're able to take those fiery darts that come in at you. And it, but many times it's in that waiting time and let God build your heart. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew and build spiritual strength.

Is this affecting ministry or the church in a negative way? See on this, this is important. If I'm coming every Sunday, right? And we have an issue, me and you, me and somebody have an issue or you let, I'm going to stop using me as example. You have an example.

You have a front row, Joe, you have a problem with back row, Kathy, background, Katie, that rhymes better. And you're coming every Sunday and you're going to take communion together. And you're going to act, you're going to have your little attitude.

No, that has to be resolved. You're serving in children's ministry together. You're, you're, that's one thing Madeline will tell you.

We will not put up with on the worship team. Like I'll handle it like that, like right then. I've had, well, no, I don't, I don't clap.

I mean, yeah, I guess you can clap, but it's not, but we, that's, that's going to affect worship. And it's like, no, no, no, no. Let's meet, let's go next door right now.

We got, this is not good. But there's other things where you might not see them for a while. I, there's, there's, there's issues right now.

I know unresolved people don't even come to the church anymore. I know never see them ever again. So as much as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all men, but it's not affecting ministry.

It's not affecting the church in a negative way. I've done all I can do. But if you're coming together every Sunday and you're avoiding people, or you see, that's a good, that's a good way to know.

If you see them, you're like, you got to work that out somehow. That's not a healthy, that's not a healthy thing. I don't preach into the choir, but sometimes the choir has to repent.

Number three, consider, this is big too, consider the collateral damage. Consider the collateral damage. What I mean by that is a while ago, somebody told me, and they had a great point.

They said, hey, you need to address that. You should probably talk to them about a certain issue. I said, okay, but if I do that, I think it's going to hurt them, hurt their feelings, and they're probably not going to keep coming to church anymore.

So what is, you know, if it's not a hill to die on, if it's not a big issue, is that, is that worth the collateral damage? It even happened just recently. I just, I just backed away from, from how I was going to, you know, talk about some certain things and just, just backed away because the collateral damage, I don't want people leaving with this view of, of the church or myself and same in your own life. You know, if I address this with somebody, what, what can I never, can I not see my kids now for a year and my grandkids? What's the collateral damage? What, what, what, what is going to result from this? And number four, we can say a big, big amen after this one, discern the best time to address the conflict.

You know, somebody just went through something and by the way, we need to talk. Or somebody just lost their job and they're, they're in tears. You know, by the way, we need to have a discussion.

And there's times where you just, you just put off the conflict. Maybe God is working in their heart. Maybe God is drawing them closer to him.

And sometimes this happens here at the church over the years where, you know, somebody is, they're not going in a good direction. And so do we, do we lovingly confront and say, because if you get to Matthew 18, there's a process where you have to tell people, Hey, you can't come to church anymore and act as if nothing is wrong. We've, we went to you, we brought others to you, we prayed for it, but this is very, very unhealthy and we can't, we can't allow this anymore.

But knowing that conversation is probably going to get them very bitter at the church and resentful and maybe take, or do we wait a couple of weeks or a couple of months and pray and say, okay, Lord, are you working in their heart? Are you, are they changing? And then, and then you consider, you know, what is the best way to do this? Is it, is the timing right, right now? So you have to discern the best because there are churches, there are churches out there, mainly hyper-conservative churches. They love Matthew 18. Matthew 18 is framed in their office.

Matthew 18 says, confront a brother. If he doesn't repent, bring back two. If he still doesn't repent, tell it to the church.

And Jesus, Jesus said, treat them as a tax collector and a heathen. The reason was in the temple was their fellowship. Nowadays, it doesn't work as well as it was designed to do, but somebody's caught in sin.

Let's say they're cheating on their wife and they're still going to come to the temple and you rebuke them. You talk to them. Nope, I don't care.

I'm bringing my girlfriend. Get over it. Well, now the whole church has to say, nope, you're in sin.

You can't fellowship with us anymore. The point isn't to rebuke them. It's for restoration.

Hopefully they feel the pain that they've caused. They can't fellowship at the church, at the temple. Many times they would lose their job.

And so that's how you're supposed to do it. But some churches just want to get right to that point. Hey, we talked to you Tuesday.

I brought a witness on Wednesday. And on Thursday, we're applying church discipline. We're pushing you out.

We're getting you out of here. That's a very prideful, judgmental, arrogant heart. But then sadly, there's a lot of churches that never apply that.

Never even, well, you know, let's just hope the Holy Spirit changes them. Well, you're a tool of the Holy Spirit. Did you know that? Even the church, God will use sometimes us.

Iron, sharpening, iron, and cutting deeply. And then number five is important. You offer, okay, what's the action plan? What's the action plan? How can we come alongside you and help? How can we fix this going forward? You have a plan in place.

Like with the church, when we've had to take, you know, maybe a hard stance on something. And maybe remove somebody from a position. And we don't just say, okay, well now, take care.

Wish you the best. Like, okay, what's the action plan? How does this look? We want to walk alongside of you through this. Meet with such and such counseling.

And how can we help you? And don't forget about the victim. Maybe the family or the spouse. And there's a plan to walk alongside with them versus just push them away and say, well, I'll see you in six months.

Or stay away from me. That's not biblical either. There has to be an action plan.

And then finally, take a deep breath. You can't change them, but you can change, let's all say that again, class. Isn't that so true? But I like to read it.

I can't change them, but I'm going to try. Or I think I can change them. Be encouraged.

God sees your heart and will reward you based on your actions, not the action of the other person. You can't change them, but you can change you. Here's the breaking news.

You guys ready for this? It's going to be hard to swallow. Here we go. Some people may never change.

Stop trying to force it. Stop trying to make it happen. Some relationships may never mend.

Anybody have any of those? Me and my wife talk about it often. Remember such and such. Remember such and such.

Remember whatever happened. What happened? And we reach out. You try to fix it.

They don't want to call. They don't want to talk. There's nothing you can do.

It may never ever fix itself. It hurts, doesn't it? Anybody ever have those? Maybe the 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. can relate better. But you have those relationships.

They might not ever mend. Some friendships may never continue. Oh, man.

But I think the sooner we realize that, the better. Some friendships may never continue. So here's the key.

Pray and wait on God and work on you. He often fixes the situation. He fixes you or he fixes them as you're waiting on God.

Or sometimes it's just a matter of letting it go and relying on God. And then as a closing point that is so important, we're talking about being offended by things. The cross is offensive.

Did you know the cross is offensive? First Corinthians. For the message of the cross is foolishness. It's offensive.

It's stupid. It makes no sense. I reject it.

I don't like it because I'm perishing. I'm dying spiritually. So I'm in darkness.

I don't like the light shining in my face. But to those of us who are being saved, it's the power of God. Amplified version.

For the message of the cross is absurd and illogical to those who are perishing, to those who are spiritually dead because they reject it. But to those who are being saved by God's grace, it's the manifestation of the power of God. The cross reveals the power of God.

We realize that it reconciled me with God. So I love the cross. I cherish the cross, the old rugged cross.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus will set me free. And we love that. But those who are dying spiritually hate the message of the cross.

It's offensive to them. And even Galatians 5, I want to bring this up to some people that might be listening. The offense of the cross.

Galatians is an interesting book, especially chapter 5. People are actually offended, so-called Christians, religious leaders, by Paul's message. He says, who has bewitched you? Are you going to finish in the flesh what began in the spirit? You're adding all these things? Have you ever been around those people that add all these things? If you don't follow the Jewish festivals. I've had people leave the church.

You don't follow the Jewish festivals? Did you know that Christ was the foreshadowing? He fulfilled those? Yeah, but how dare you meet on Sunday? Seventh-day Adventist or Sabbath? How dare you meet on Sunday? You are apostate. That was brought in by the Roman Catholic Church. It's the mark of the beast.

Actually, it was instituted in the early church. Jesus rose on Sunday. They celebrated his death, burial, and resurrection.

In China, they celebrate at 4 a.m. on Friday so they don't get persecuted. So you're saying you're more holy than the underground church in China, who can go to prison for their faith? In Iraq, it's Friday after midnight to avoid the police. Paul said, don't dispute over Sabbath and festivals and different things because Christ is a fulfillment of them all.

Now, I still believe there's a Sabbath rest, that it's a principle that you should take a day off. But I don't think you're worshipping me on Sunday. You're all in sin.

Think how foolish that is. You're all in sin because you're here worshipping me, singing my praises at the altar, repenting. You should have that yesterday.

Just think of the foolishness of that. But see, adding to the finished, finished work of Jesus Christ, it is partially done. Is that what he said on the cross? Okay, Father, I did some of it.

I did some of it. Now they need to go to purgatory for a while. Now they need to do this.

They need to be circumcised. They need to be baptized. By the time they're six months, they need to obey all the festivals.

That's foolishness. And people say, you know, they fall to ceremonial laws or being a good person. And that's not what saves you.

It's offensive to the prideful heart to say they can't save themselves. So this morning, we want to give you the opportunity. We want to give you the opportunity.

Those listening, even, I don't know everyone here. I'm not going to see some of you ever again. Do you realize that? I know that I will not see some people here ever again.

So what would you say? People visiting out of town, listening, are saying, I'm not ever coming back. That guy upset me. Well, I've got one shot to let the cross break you.

Let the cross humble you. And we're actually going to have baptisms today. So if you'd like to get baptized, if you'd like to make that public declaration, or if you've been a Christian, but you've never been baptized, or if you're like me, I baptized at 12, and I just want to get in the pool.

I didn't know what it meant. My mom was so happy. I'm like, what does this mean? And then I lived like hell.

I was on the highway to hell and wanted to get baptized again at 30 and make that final profession of faith. So we've got water in the baptismal. We're going to have men go on this side and women go on this side during closing worship.

And I can baptize you, Pastor Abram can baptize you, or either one of us is available. So I'm going to have the worship team come up and we're going to close out on this point. But I want to encourage you, if you've never repented of your sin, now is the time to do it.

Don't let the cross be offensive. Don't let the cross be offensive. Let it be a wonderful

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