

Go to Higher Ground

The first of 4 godly responses to conflict
Glorify God – 1 Corinthians 10:31

Life Bridge Community Church
Week 3 of 8



Review

Effects of Conflict: Conflict builds walls and tears down relationships

The Slippery Slope: Don't attack or escape, rather get into the peacemaking zone (the 4 G's)

Overlooking: In context, can I just let this go?

What was going on in Corinth?

The church's focus: Everyone was acting in their own personal interest (what's in it for me?)

Paul's focus: Imitate, glorify and act for the Lord (1 Cor 10:31 – Do all to the glory of God.)

The Horizontal Heart

In conflict, all our focus is often on each other (the horizontal): blaming, hurting, etc.

Where's God (the vertical) in this picture?

The Moment

There is at least one point in every conflict when we decide whether to pour water or gasoline on the spark. We always have a choice. We must change the question...

From: **How do I win in this moment?**

To: **How do I please and honor God in this moment?**

The Hope and Impact of the Gospel

What is the gospel?

See Colossians 1:21-22; John 3:16

The gospel is not just a golden ticket to heaven; it affects every aspect of our lives.

See Colossians 3:12-13; 2 Corinthians 2:15-17

When ...	In myself ...	But in Christ ...
I'm fearful of the future	Consumed by worry, I assume the worst and lose hope.	Because God did not spare His own Son, I can trust that He walks with me and cares for me. (Rom 8:32)
I've fallen into sin	I cover it up, hide it, minimize it, or find someone else to blame.	Because God delights to forgive, I can freely confess my sins to Him and others. (Prov 28:13)
Things are going well	I take pride in my achievements (and look down on others).	Because, in Christ, all good gifts are from God, I humbly thank Him and gladly share the blessing. (1 Cor 4:7)
Someone wrongs me	I'm bitter or angry, and fight for my rights. Estrangement. Payback.	Because I've been forgiven, I can forgive others, and show mercy and compassion to them. (Eph 4:32)

It's not "I should."
It's "I can" (because God's Spirit is in me).
Eventually it will become, "I want to."

The Unmerciful Servant: Matthew 18:21-33

Scene 1: An unfathomable and unpayable debt, but mercy is granted.

Scene 2: A small, manageable debt, but no mercy is given.

Our debts to one another are trivial compared to our debts to God. All sin is ultimately against God.

Scene 3: Justice is done; (pressed down, shaken together, running over

Given how much you've been forgiven, shouldn't the gospel deeply affect you and cause mercy to overflow from you to others?

The gospel – understood, appreciated and embedded – overflows all and transforms all.

See Ezekiel 36:25-26 – “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean...”

The Deeply Loved Woman: Luke 7:39-50

One who has been forgiven much, loves much. One who has been forgiven little, loves little.

“Relationships get easier in your life when the gospel gets bigger in your heart.”

Discussion Question(s)

1. What is your “Logbook”? What thing(s) in your life are you holding onto so tightly that you would wrestle with God over them? What would please and honor God with regard to it/them?
2. Scenario: Jim comes home from work. He seems sullen and distracted. His wife Susan has had a hard day herself. In fact, she got home late from work, and has just realized that she forgot to plan for dinner. Now, Jim sticks his head into the kitchen wondering how much longer dinner will be. At this moment:
 - a) What responses would glorify self (and likely start a brush fire)?
 - b) What responses would glorify God (and be a “holy fire extinguisher”)?
3. If God is the one who changes hearts, then why do we so often not change when we want to so badly? What is our role in growing to be more like Jesus (sanctification)?
4. When we’re having a morning like the couple in the video who are getting ready for church, what practical things can we do to interrupt it, remember the Lord, and take a more God-honoring path?