
Family Talk on Conflict

Philippians 4:1-9

Introduction

The book closes with instructions for Christians in conflict. Watch the melodic line = be at peace (v.2) have peace from God (v.7) and have the God of peace (v.9).

Responsibility to Help People in Disagreement

Where we tend to listen and empathize rather than work to solve differences.

Loving Relationship (v.1)

Paul's counsel and correction comes through the unity of a loving relationship.

Patient Appeal (v.2)

By name he calls for these two ladies to agree in the Lord.

Faithful Helpers (v.3)

Rather than spreading division, people were to pressing and helping for unity.

Greater Unity (v.3)

This unity is grounded in service and in salvation.

The whole book of Philippians is designed to bring us to this appeal. Christians will disagree. But let us recognize our unity in Christ and work alongside of one another to bring about agreement.

What is to Characterize People in Disagreement

Where we tend to lose our perspective and our joy. These are all given to us as commands.

Rejoicing in the Lord (v.4)

In the midst of disagreement, we must continue to rejoice in our heavenly Master. The repetition points to how easily and quickly we can become sour and disgruntled in disagreement.

Reasonableness (v.5)

We must be sweetly reasonable, open-hearted, approachable at all times, but particularly when hard-hearted defensiveness and unreasonableness will undermine discussion and agreement.

Requests to the Lord (v.6)

How our hearts can churn with anxieties and worries when we are in the process of conflict. We must bring them to the Lord in prayer bathed in thanksgiving. Yet, how often do actually pray over problems?

Rest in the Lord**(v.7)**

Finally, the result is a quietness and peace which guides and guards our hearts, our souls. Outward conflict will not produce inward turmoil. There will be an inner resting in Christ as His indescribable peace protects our thoughts and wants.

There are going to be times when Christians will disagree and even be in major conflict. We see this in life and ministry of Paul. But we must become like this so as to please God until we come to the point of agreement.

How to Respond when in Disagreement

Where we tend to impute motives and think badly of others.

In What We Think**(v.8)**

In the context, these are the way we ought to think about others. We often are tempted to think wrongly about others. So, first, let me turn this around and expose how we often think in the midst of differences and conflict. We entertain thoughts that are untrue, false, dishonorable, unjust, unwholesome, ugly, shameful, mean, frivolous – anything that is demeaning and detrimental.

True	Guard against untrue, dishonest and unreliable thoughts about others.
Honorable	Noble, dignified, not attributing dishonorable or lowly motivations
Just	Righteous, not attributing unjust, unfounded accusations or charges
Pure	Wholesome, not attributing immoral or impure motives
Lovely	Not thinking ugly, corrosive, destructive thoughts
Commendable	Thoughts that are approved by all, that would not be shameful if visible to all
Excellent	Thoughts that would be characterized as full of virtue
Praise-worthy	Thoughts that would affirmed as admirable

In Whom We Follow**(v.9)**

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Conclusion

Thus while we are working toward agreement we can still have peace!