

## **Understanding Conflict and Conflict Styles**, (p. 22 in curriculum)

### **CONFLICT...**

#### → Unavoidable part of life

*“Conflict is natural, normal, neutral, and sometimes delightful. It can turn into painful or disastrous ends, but it doesn’t need to. Conflict is neither good nor bad, right nor wrong. Conflict simply is.”*

David Augsburger, in *Caring Enough to Confront* (p. 11)

#### → Definition of conflict

*“... conflict is when what you want, need or expect interferes with I want, need or expect.”* – Susan H. Shearhouse

#### → Issues of conflict

Some of the common issues (or apparent issues) around which conflict revolves are personality, power, perspective, preference, pride

#### → A common occurrence in the early Church

#### → An obstacle or an opportunity that will divide or unite.

#### → Conflict is many faceted and has multiple aspects requiring varied responses. Thus, there are many scriptural instructions. At the core, we must be walking in step with the Spirit, asking to see what He sees and how He wants us to say and do... then doing so in His power and love.

#### → A sampling of Biblical instructions

**John 13:35 (ESV)** <sup>35</sup>By this **all people will know** that you are my disciples, if you have **love for one another.**”

**Ephesians 4:14–15 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup>so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup>Rather, **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

**James 1:19–20 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup>Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be **quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger**; <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

**Romans 12:18–21 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup>**If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.** <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” <sup>20</sup>**To the contrary**, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

## **Understanding Conflict and Conflict Styles**, (p. 22 in curriculum)

### **CONFLICT...**

#### → Unavoidable part of life

*“Conflict is natural, normal, neutral, and sometimes delightful. It can turn into painful or disastrous ends, but it doesn’t need to. Conflict is neither good nor bad, right nor wrong. Conflict simply is.”*

David Augsburger, in *Caring Enough to Confront* (p. 11)

#### → Definition of conflict

*“... conflict is when what you want, need or expect interferes with I want, need or expect.”* – Susan H. Shearhouse

#### → Issues of conflict

Some of the common issues (or apparent issues) around which conflict revolves are personality, power, perspective, preference, pride

#### → A common occurrence in the early Church

#### → An obstacle or an opportunity that will divide or unite.

#### → Conflict is many faceted and has multiple aspects requiring varied responses. Thus, there are many scriptural instructions. At the core, we must be walking in step with the Spirit, asking to see what He sees and how He wants us to say and do... then doing so in His power and love.

#### → A sampling of Biblical instructions

**John 13:35 (ESV)** <sup>35</sup>By this **all people will know** that you are my disciples, if you have **love for one another.**”

**Ephesians 4:14–15 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup>so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup>Rather, **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,

**James 1:19–20 (ESV)** <sup>19</sup>Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be **quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger**; <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

**Romans 12:18–21 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup>**If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.** <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” <sup>20</sup>**To the contrary**, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Ephesians 4:31–32 (ESV)** <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander **be put away from you**, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

**Matthew 7:12 (ESV)** <sup>12</sup>“So **whatever you wish that others would do to you, do** also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

**Matthew 5:23–24 (ESV)** <sup>23</sup>So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>**leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled** to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

**1 Corinthians 12:25–27 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup>that there may be **no division in the body**, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If **one member suffers, all suffer together**; if **one member is honored, all rejoice together.** <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

### **CONFLICT STYLES...**

Every person has a preferred, or default, style of response when in conflict. The Kraybill Conflict Style Inventory provides a picture of that default response. The point is not the numbers but to provide a tool to help us improve, to better align ourselves with God’s instructions in leveraging conflict to love God and others. Our style is a non-judgmental starting point.

- ✓ Recognize that all styles are appropriate at appropriate times.
- ✓ Develop humility and love as our motivation when in conflict.
- ✓ Be aware of our defaults, both healthy and unhealthy.
- ✓ Train ourselves in all styles and when each is useful, pp. 11-16.
- ✓ Train ourselves to identify how we and others are responding in conflict so you can respond in Christ’s love, pp. 17-19.
- ✓ Choose to respond in love in each situation by Surrendering, Listening and Obeying.

**Ephesians 4:31–32 (ESV)** <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander **be put away from you**, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

**Matthew 7:12 (ESV)** <sup>12</sup>“So **whatever you wish that others would do to you, do** also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

**Matthew 5:23–24 (ESV)** <sup>23</sup>So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>**leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled** to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

**1 Corinthians 12:25–27 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup>that there may be **no division in the body**, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If **one member suffers, all suffer together**; if **one member is honored, all rejoice together.** <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

### **CONFLICT STYLES...**

Every person has a preferred, or default, style of response when in conflict. The Kraybill Conflict Style Inventory provides a picture of that default response. The point is not the numbers but to provide a tool to help us improve, to better align ourselves with God’s instructions in leveraging conflict to love God and others. Our style is a non-judgmental starting point.

- ✓ Recognize that all styles are appropriate at appropriate times.
- ✓ Develop humility and love as our motivation when in conflict.
- ✓ Be aware of our defaults, both healthy and unhealthy.
- ✓ Train ourselves in all styles and when each is useful, pp. 11-16.
- ✓ Train ourselves to identify how we and others are responding in conflict so you can respond in Christ’s love, pp. 17-19.
- ✓ Choose to respond in love in each situation by Surrendering, Listening and Obeying.