

What Would Jesus Say. . . about conflict?

Message Summary

Engaging in Peacemaking is a choice to continue God's redemptive work in the world.

Engaging the Word

What are some things that stood out to you in the sermon? Things you specifically related to? Things you didn't understand? Any new insight you are taking away?

Read Ephesians 4:25-27

1. Verse 26 says, "In your anger do not sin" (NIV). Compare and contrast what it looks like to allow your anger to cause you to sin and what it looks like to be angry and not sin.
2. Why is it a good idea to resolve things quickly, "Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry." v. 26 (NIV)?
3. It is important to understand the context of these verses. Start reading in verse 17 and continue through verse 27. What is the context that leads up to verses 25-27? How does this context help us to understand verses 25-27?

Read Matthew 18:15-17

1. Describe, in your own words, the process of conflict resolution listed in these verses.
2. In what ways is this a useful progression in dealing with conflict?
3. Like so many other verses that talk about interpersonal relationships these verses have been, at times, abused. What are some ways you could see that these steps might be abused and how could we avoid that?
4. What does it mean when referring to those that refuse to listen to "treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector" v. 17 (NIV)? Hint: How SHOULD the Church respond to those that are outside the church? To put it another way, how did Jesus respond to the tax collectors and sinners he encountered?

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Engaging the Heart

1. Brainstorm: What are some general categories that conflict can fall into in our lives?
2. In your opinion, what are some reasons we avoid resolving our conflicts?
3. Conflict is unavoidable but how or if we resolve it is under our control. Why is it important to resolve conflict? What happens when we just ignore it?
4. Josh has said, "Engaging in Peacemaking is a choice to continue God's redemptive work in the world." What is the correlation between peacemaking and redemption?

Engaging our World

As you close your group, spend a few moments in silent reflection on the three questions Josh asked. For most of us, it is probably not difficult to think of some area of conflict we have in our lives. Some major and some very minor. The principle is the same. Try to think of some specific area of conflict in your life. Maybe it was something that was done to you. Maybe it is the result of something you have done. Honestly thinking through the three questions below can lead to the first steps in resolving that conflict.

- What conflict do I want resolved?
- How have I contributed to the conflict?
- What next steps do I need to take to resolve it?