
Survivor or Learning How to Solve Conflicts

Series: Relationship Realities

Malachi 2:13-16 (NIV)

1. CONFLICT IN AN EARTHLY RELATIONSHIP CAN HINDER OUR HEAVENLY ONE.

v. 14 "You ask, 'Why?' It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

- When two people spend enough time together, conflict will occur sooner or later.

1 Corinthian 7:28 (NIV)

But if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this.

- When we have a broken relationship with our spouse, it hinders our relationship with God.

Matthew 5:23-24 (MsgB)

"This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, ²⁴abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God.

- God desires for couples to work through the conflict so that it does not hinder their fellowship with Him.

2. UNRESOLVED CONFLICT DESTROYS THE "ONE FLESH" RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR SPOUSE.

v. 15 "Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth."

- Unresolved conflict begins to fester and eat away at the unity of the relationship.

Ephesians 4:26 (NIV)

"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. . .

- Conflict is the result of seeking my own way rather than reconciliation.

James 4:1-3 (NIV)

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ²You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

3. CONFLICT LEFT UNRESOLVED LONG ENOUGH CAN LEAD TO AN END TO THE RELATIONSHIP.

v. 16 "I hate divorce,' says the Lord God of Israel, 'and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment,' says the Lord Almighty.

So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith."

- While divorce is permitted under certain circumstances, God hates it because it circumvents His plans for that couple.

Matthew 5:31-32 (NIV)

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' ³²But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

- I must do everything possible to guard my relationship.

Romans 12:17-18 (NIV)

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. [18] If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Steps to RESOLVE conflict in your relationship:

Remember the commitment you made to that person.

Eliminate wrong attitudes or actions toward your spouse.

Seek to understand their position.

Offer your side with conviction, but remain calm.

Leave old conflicts and arguments in the past.

Vocalize your desire to resolve the source of the conflict.

Explore ways to prevent the conflict in the future.