

# RESOLVING EVERYDAY CONFLICT

Week 6: Gentle Restoration



# WHY RESTORE?

- “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Gal. 6:1
- “Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.” Prov. 9:8-9
- “Better is open rebuke than hidden love.” Prov. 27:5
- “Nothing is so cruel as the tenderness that consigns another to his sin. Nothing can be more compassionate than the severe rebuke that calls a brother back from the path of sin.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

# WHAT? | FIRE-STOKING VS GENTLE RESTORATION

<b>Stoking the Fire</b>	<b>Gently Restoring</b>
<b>Looks forward to the confrontation itself</b>	Sees a confrontation as a regrettable necessity
<b>Based primarily on irritation or anger</b>	Based primarily on love seeking understanding
<b>Primary goal of communicating a grievance</b>	Primary goal of a restoring a person or relationship
<b>Can be done with little to no self-examination</b>	Preceded by careful self-examination of heart
<b>Little attention given to timing, style or exact content of confrontation</b>	Preceded by careful consideration of the best timing, style and content of confrontation

Go in love or don't go at all! (Matt. 7:12)

# DISCUSS

- **Which fire-stoking behaviors are the easiest to fall into during confrontation? Which gentle-restorative behaviors are the most difficult in practice? Why?**

# HOW?

- Matt 18:15
  - Keep things as private as possible for as long as possible
  - Speak face-to-face when possible with a phone call as a second option. As a general rule, avoid using emails and texts.
  - Be quick to listen. Ask questions that discern the heart. You can see the “what” but not the “why.”
  - Bring in the hope of the Gospel. Don’t leave someone feeling condemned even in repentance!

# HOW? | CONFLICT WHEN SIN IS THE PRIMARY ISSUE...

- Matt 18:16
  - Only bring in other wise believers as a second-step.
  - In some cases, it may be wise to alert the other person that you are doing so.
  - *Do not seek counsel from your group of yes-men or women.* Involve people who will tell you that you are wrong and who are willing to point out your blind spots.

# DISCUSS

- What are some reasons people resist bringing others into their conflict resolution, despite making no progress toward restoration?

# THE SURGICAL MODEL FOR GENTLE RESTORATION—NEVER CUT BLINDLY

- Have I prayed for wisdom and acknowledged my need for God to help me as I prepare for and move forward with this confrontation?
- Have I observed a serious offense or a standing pattern sufficient to warrant an incision?
- Am I content to address one area of concern even if I am aware of multiple?
- Am I committed to making an incision no larger than necessary?
- Am I humbly prepared to offer an observation as opposed to an assumption or conclusion?
- Is my goal in spiritual surgery restorative love and truth or personal preference?



# DISCUSS

- In your experience, what are the most challenging aspects of the Surgical Model of restoration? Why?

# FINAL THOUGHTS

- We must not let desires for our own comfort and social harmony trump our obligation to gently restore and confront in love.
- Faithful, gentle efforts at restoration don't always result in tear-free conversations where everyone leaves happy
- Let love and humility dominate your confrontation