

**If You Bite and Devour  
One Another**  
Galatians 5:15

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**Benefits of conflict:**

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Conflict can help us...

1. Discover our character weaknesses,
2. Correct mistaken theological ideas,
3. Sharpen our beliefs,
4. Refine our plans,
5. Grow in wisdom and life experience,
6. To trust God during difficult times
7. Deepen our prayer lives

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**Error during conflict:**

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1. Use mean words
2. Have angry attitudes
3. Give hostile looks
4. Behave childishly
5. Be selfish and prideful
6. Backbite and gossip
7. Justify our sin
8. Disobey God's word
9. Lack forgiveness
10. Show no interest in reconciliation

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Galatians 3:1-5

"O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith...?"

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Galatians 4:8-11

"Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain."

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Galatians 5:7-12

"You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!"

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Galatians 5:15

"But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another."

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Galatians 5:17

"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."

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**Three key principles for resolving conflict:**

1. Do not walk according to the flesh  
(5:15-17; 19-21; 24; 26)
2. Walk by the Spirit  
(5:16-18; 22-23; 24-25)
3. Love and serve one another  
(5:13-14)

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1 Corinthians 3:3-4

“...you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?”

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2 Corinthians 12:20

“For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish—that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.”

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The Works of the Flesh

(Galatians 5:19-21)	(2 Corinthians 12:20)
Enmity	Quarreling
Strife	Jealousy
Jealousy	Anger
Fits of anger	Hostility
Rivalries	Slander
Dissensions	Gossip
Divisions	Conceit
Envy	Disorder

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Galatians 5:16, 18, 25

16 "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

18 "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."

25 "If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit."

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James 3:13-15, The wisdom from below

"But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."

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James 3:17, The wisdom from above

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."

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Romans 4:23-25

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But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification."

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**Justification** is a legal act of God, in which God declares a guilty sinner not only as innocent but as righteous. God sees this sinner not only as pardoned of his sin but as if he has NEVER sinned. This righteousness is based on Jesus Christ's righteousness imputed to the sinner by the shedding of his blood.

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**Justification is:**

- a once and for all act of God
- by Faith and not by works
- by Grace and not by law
- by the power and will of God not by man's volition

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Exodus 15:3

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"The Lord is a man of war; The Lord is his name."

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Exodus Nahum 1:2

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"The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies."

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Romans 2:5

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"But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed."

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Psalm 5:5-6

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"The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man."

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Psalm 2:12

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"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled."

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John 3:36

“Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

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Revelation 19:15

“From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.”

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Revelation 14:10-11

“He will drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

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Psalm 11:5

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"The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence."

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Psalm 7:11-12

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"God is a righteous judge, and a God who is angry with the wicked every day. If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and readied his bow;"

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Romans 5:10

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"For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life."

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Colossians 1:20-22

“through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,”

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*Through our Lord Jesus Christ*

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Romans 11:36

“For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

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Matthew 27:51

“And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.”

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Hebrews 10:19-20

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.”

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Hebrews 14:6

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

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Ephesians 2:14-22

"For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

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*"Grace is the lone source from which flows the goodwill, love, and salvation of God unto His chosen people'... He goes on to say, " Divine grace is the sovereign and saving favor of God exercised in bestowing blessings upon those who have no merit in them and for which no compensation is demanded."*

-A.W. Pink, *The Attributes of God*

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Ephesians 2:8

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,"

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**Grace is** unmerited favor of God given to his people not based on anything they have done but based solely on God's loving sovereign choice as a gift. This Grace only comes through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Galatians 3:3

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"Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"

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1. Read Ephesians 4:2-3. A. What characteristics should be present during conflict (v.2)?

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B. What should be our goal during conflict (v.3)?

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2. Below are the 12 “the works of the flesh” found in Galatians 5:19-21 and 2 Corinthians 12:20. 1. Enmity 2. Strife 3. Jealousy 4. Fits of anger 5. Rivalries 6. Dissensions 7. Divisions 8. Envy 9. Slander 10. Gossip 11. Conceit 12. Disorder. When we, as Christians, display “the works of the flesh” during conflicts, what impact can we expect it to have on:

- (1). Our own interpersonal relationships?
- (2). Our relationship with God?
- (3). Our testimony for Christ?

3. Below are “the fruits of the Spirit” and the “wisdom from above” found in Galatians 5:22-23 and James 3:17. 1. Love 2. Joy 3. Peace 4. Patient 5. Kindness 6. Goodness 7. Faithfulness 8. Gentleness 9. Self-control 10. Pure 11. Open to reason 12. Full of mercy 13. Full of good fruits 14. Impartial 15. Sincere. When we, as Christians, display “the fruits of the Spirit” and “wisdom from above” during conflicts, what impact can we expect it to have on:

- (1). Our own interpersonal relationships?
- (2). Our relationship with God?

(3). Our testimony for Christ?

4. Read James 4:1-3 A. What causes quarrels and fights among us?

\_\_\_\_\_ B. What hinders our prayers? \_\_\_\_\_ C. How do we keep from falling into this trap?

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5. Read James 4:6 A. Who does God resist? B. Who receives grace from Him? C. How can you tell when you are acting in pride or in humility?

6. Read Philippians 2:3-8 in contrast to what we just read in James. A. According to James, our own selfish desires are the primary source of most conflicts. With this in mind, see if you can come up with at least 4 principles from Philippians 2:3-4 that can help you better avoid, navigate and resolve conflicts.

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B. In v. 5 Paul says “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.” Discuss the humility of Christ and how we might better have the mind of Christ when working through conflicts.

C. How might we better imitate Christ’s example?

8. When dealing with conflict A. How do you know what to overlook?

\_\_\_\_\_ B. How do you know what to confront? \_\_\_\_\_ C. If you have time, list steps that you would take in confronting.

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