

Sunday School

Overcoming a Contentious Spirit

A “contentious spirit” is an attitude of opposition, and a pattern of strife and conflict, that negatively impacts relationships.

Characteristics of a Contentious Spirit

1. **Contention is not the same as biblical confrontation.**

Biblical confrontation is done in love for the sake of the truth and the good of others (Matt.

2. **Contention is contagious.**

Proverbs 22:10 Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out, Even strife and dishonor will cease.

Proverbs 26:20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

Proverbs 26:21 *Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.

3. **Contention Builds Barriers**

Proverbs 18:19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.

4. **Contention is evil**

Proverbs 6:14 Who *with* perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife.

Proverbs 6:19 (16-19) A false witness *who* utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Proverbs 16:28 A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends.

Proverbs 17:19 He who loves transgression loves strife; He who raises his door seeks destruction.

Romans 1:28-29 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips.

Romans 13:13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.



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1 Corinthians 3:3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?

2 Corinthians 12:20 For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps *there will be* strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances;

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal 5:19-21)

Contention wears people down

Deuteronomy 1:12 'How can I alone bear the load and burden of you and your strife?

Proverbs 19:13 A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.

Proverbs 21:9 It is better to live in a corner of a roof Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 21:19 It is better to live in a desert land Than with a contentious and vexing woman.

Proverbs 25:24 It is better to live in a corner of the roof Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 27:15 A constant dripping on a day of steady rain And a contentious woman are alike;

Proverbs 17:1 Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it Than a house full of feasting with strife.

Contention comes from people

- **Gossip**

Proverbs 26:20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

Proverbs 6:14 Who *with* perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife.

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- **Drunkenness**

Proverbs 23:29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?

- **Hatred**

Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.

- **Pride**

Proverbs 13:10 Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.

1 Timothy 6:4 he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

- **Anger**

Proverbs 15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.

Proverbs 28:25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.

Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

Proverbs 30:33 For the churning of milk produces butter, And pressing the nose brings forth blood; So the churning of anger produces strife.

- **Foolish hearts**

Proverbs 18:6 A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.

Proverbs 20:3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.

Proverbs 26:17 *Like* one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by *and* meddles with strife not belonging to him.

- **Selfish hearts**

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. (Jam 4:1-2)

- **A love of controversy**

1 Tim. 6:3-4 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions.



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Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

Overcoming a Contentious Spirit

1. In ourselves
 - Avoid quarrels

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is *like* letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, **self-controlled**, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, **not quarrelsome**, not a lover of money. (1Tim. 3:2-3 ESV)

2. In others
 - Be FIRM
 - ⁹ But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.
 - ¹⁰ Reject a factious man after a first and second warning,
 - ¹¹ knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned. (Titus 3:9-11)

Proverbs 22:10 Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out, Even strife and dishonor will cease.

Proverbs 26:20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

- Be a PEACEMAKER
 - But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.
 - And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (Jam 3:17-18)

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, (2Tim. 2:24)

Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. (Titus 3:1-2 NAU)

