

Conflict Case Study

Name: Lee Y Lin

ATS/NY City

Personal, Professional, and Theological Foundations For Ministry

Course Number: SF505

Semester & Year: Fall 2020

Professor: Dr. Ronald Walborn

Date Submitted: 11/23/2020

Conflict Case Study

Background

WG is a young professional in his late twenties who has been a member of our church for five years. Most would describe him as friendly and loyal, but since a young age he struggled with constant feelings of inadequacy and poor self-esteem. He was in a two year relationship with RJ, another member of our church, and they subsequently got engaged. But things fell apart as RJ started to be honest about how she genuinely felt about marriage/engagement and more importantly how she honestly felt about WG. For WG, this breakup felt like a major betrayal. Deeply hurt and angry, he believed he deserved an apology. After several weeks he contacted me and explained he was now contemplating leaving the church.

Make the first move / Ask God for wisdom

Meeting with WG one on one, we began to talk about what God desires and what WG actually desires - reconciliation. More than feeling justified, more than getting even, WG came to humble sober recognition that what he truly needed was to be reconciled to RJ, and that without reconciliation he was also cutting himself off from the Lord. He also agreed that leaving the church would just be running away because of fear.

Begin with what's my fault

While my wife and I were able to discern that his ex-fiancé was in many ways the major offender, we didn't allow that to be a reason for WG to avoid the process of self-examination. WG began to identify his immature responses, particularly his desire for getting even. Another

major area that we identified together was how throughout the relationship WG had put his self-worth in the relationship, placing his whole identity and self-esteem into dating RJ. As part of his healing and restoration we met together once a week to read and pray from *Who I Am In Christ* by Neil T. Anderson.

Listen for their hurt and perspective / Speak the truth tactfully

WG subsequently met with RJ to talk one on one but he later admitted to me it was difficult. He confessed he was in some ways still looking for an apology. It also didn't help that RJ in some ways had already moved on (from our pastoral perspective too quickly) so what she shared with him was muted.

Focus on reconciliation, not resolution

WG's meeting with RJ was in some respects unsatisfying, but with loving firmness I stuck with Pastor Rick Warren's guidance that perfect resolution is not necessarily the goal, nor is it needed for WG to forgive fully and bury the hatchet, even if it is at the moment one sided.

Follow up

In follow up, WG has begun to let go of what he imagines would be a "perfect" outcome, agreeing that what matters is reconciliation and the freedom that it brings. He admits being in the same room with RJ can sometimes trigger feelings of anger and sadness, but this has improved over time as we continue to meet together for counseling and prayer for inner healing.