

Conflict Resolution Assignment ATS

SF505: PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL/THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR MINISTRY
Erica Williams

Almost always there will be conflict present in every arena in our lives and the church isn't to be excluded. Conflicts in life are impossible to avoid in life no matter who we are. The bible shares several scriptures that address how we should handle conflict in the church as Christians. Even the Old Testament offers guidance on how we are to resolve conflict with one another. We can learn a lot about conflict resolution tools from the Bible's teachings. We can master this task when we imitate the love of Christ in dealing with our enemy. Rick Warren shared steps to handling conflict in all areas of one's life. The bible clearly states Matthew 5:9 *"Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God"* In the video Pastor Rick highlighted the seven steps to solving conflict. Pastor Rick stated that the very first thing that most people do when conflict occurs is run away opposite of the conflict. I can certainly attest to this practice; as I have done it several times. However, I have learned in life that conflict avoidance can only serve to make matters worse when we don't address things head on. One clear take away was that when we are facing conflict, we enable both sides an opportunity to clear the clutter and make amendments. Without this opportunity present no one is afforded the opportunity to heal, understand or reconcile.

A point taking form Pastor Rick message was that peace makers should not avoid the conflict and they also shouldn't appease the offender. Appeasing the offender can create an atmosphere of weakness and create an atmosphere conducive to breed further abuse. Pastor Rick offered 7 steps to resolving conflict and resolve problems. I have examined Pastor Ricks 7 steps to resolving conflict and one clear message that I walk away with is was I can never be right with God if I'm wrong with others. In the church setting there are times when conflict will arise and we must exemplify Christ like response when they do.

One conflict that has constantly arisen in ministry that I have witness is a constant struggle for leadership.

Many times various ministries in the church will have leaders in place that take ownership of the ministry and not keep in mind that everything that is done is done unto to God and for his glory no matter how gifted we are in that area. We all must realize that God has given us all gifts and talents James 1: 17 tells us that every gift is for God's kingdom. As Christians we shouldn't take ownership over any gifts, talents or assigned authority that God has blessed us with. Gifts, talents, treasures, and leadership authority should be handled in the spirit of meekness and humility. Wherever conflict arises especially with leadership I have always reflected on the scripture 1 Corinthians 12 many members but all belonging to one body. Speaking the truth in love, fixing the problem, and not placing blame are excellent foundational tools that anyone can use in or outside of the church.

In the past I have encountered church conflict and I was led to use a tool called transformational leadership. Transformational leadership skills can increase resolution as well as honor all parties so that all feel heard, appreciated, and valued. When we use transformational leadership in churches not only does everyone feel valued and important; but respected as well. 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 shares that there is unity and diversity in the body, and we are to embrace this. We are all very different but no one part is more valued over the other. When one member is more knowledgeable in an area, we are to support them when it is their time to lead and vice versa so that the kingdom of God ultimately benefits. Everything that we do is unto the glory of God and when the church allows pride and self-gratification arise, we are sure to run into conflict and miss the mark of God's ordained will for the body of Christ. Additional take aways from pastor Ricks video was, make the first move, be mindful of the things that you sow. Not only do you reap what you sow good or bad you receive the harvest of what you have sowed.

