

CONFLICT RESOLUTION CASE STUDY

Jennifer Skeete
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Listening to Rick Warren say, "Conflict resolution begins with me. You must make the first move if you want to resolve conflict."¹ Those words hit me like a ton of bricks in my chest. I have lived in hurt, unforgiveness, and mistrust for so long that I had become numb. I ran from conflict. I swept everything under the mat and shut down. I was so damaged that my counselor told me on our second to last session that when we first met, and she saw the hurt and the pain, she said, "How am I going to get her pass this?" But with the help of God, she did.

Through all the hurt and mistrust, I loved God with all my heart and soul, and I loved people, or so I thought, because as 1 Peter 4:8 says, "love covers a multitude of sins," and it remains forever, and that was not the case for me. Now that I know better and have had a chance to look in from the outside, I see I allowed fear of rejection to rule my life. So many things I could have done differently. As Rick Warren said, "I could have made the first move,"² and reached out to the individuals and said let's talk. Running and hiding away only made me more bitter, and what is on the inside of a person eventually comes out. Like a large intestine that leaks, and if it is not taken care of, it becomes toxic and causes death, so too, God cannot put new wine in old wineskins; it will leak and become contaminated and causes damage to the body of Christ.

There was one occasion when I invited a very close friend over for Thanksgiving dinner, and at the last moment, she canceled without an explanation. I later found out it was because another friend had invited her to have dinner with her and her family. I was devastated but said nothing, and when she stopped calling me to go shopping, I did not call either, I was actually glad she didn't call. This was a friend I traveled with and spent every weekend with, shopping,

¹ Warren, R. D., Learn How To Resolve Conflict & Restore Relationships

² Ibid

and when we were together, I would laugh until my stomach hurt. This past Christmas, we met in Barbados, and we spoke. She invited my husband and me to visit a home she bought there, but I didn't go. The hurt and pain of rejection was still there.

When the incident happened, I could have reached out and invited her to chat, told her how I felt, and confessed that my past hurts from rejection had caused me not to reach out to her and allow her to explain herself. When she invited us over at Christmas, I could have sat with her, confessed my part in the conflict, listened to her, and tried to mend the broken relationship, but my ego got in the way; I was thinking of the hurt, rejection, and the barriers I had erected went up another layer. I should have focused on reconciliation, not counting her trespasses against her, be committed to doing the will of God. As Matthew 5:9 states, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Jehovah Shalom, one of God's many names, means, The Lord is peace. Therefore, as His child, my life is not my own; I must do as He commanded.

God, being all-knowing, all-seeing, knew that hurt, pride, and egos, would get in the way, as well as they would be some people that don't want peace, so He said, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18). If an unbeliever does not want to reconcile, God said to let them go, but for us in the body of Christ there is no choice; we must try to reconcile, it is a command. Jesus said, "As I loved you, you must love each other. By this, everyone will know you are my disciples" (John 13:34-35).

"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child, but when I became an adult, I put childish ways behind me (1 Corinthians 13:11). I will no longer shrink back from conflict or sweep it under the mat, because God's perfect love that lives in me cast out all fear (1 John 4:18).

Bibliography

Warren, R. D., Learn How To Resolve Conflict & Restore Relationships with Rick Warren - Bing video, (2014) Accessed 04/12/22.