

Session 4 – Love, Differences, Conflicts

Ephesians 4:1-3

I. Love

I Corinthians 13:4-7

John 13:34,35

Ephesians 4:1-3

Definition: An unselfish concern that freely accepts another and seeks his good.

A. Four qualities of Love

Philippians 2:3,4

1. Lowliness, humility

Philippians 2:3,4

I Peter 5:5,6

a. Essential to inner rest and peace

Matthew 11:28,29

b. Eliminates stress of comparison and competition.

2. Meekness – “An unwillingness to retaliate even when possible or justifiable”

a. Basically an attitude.

"He trusted to Him who judges justly" I Peter 2:21,23

b. Is based on my concept of God

c. Doesn't imply loss of self-image - contrary - can do only when secure regarding who I am.

3. Patience, basic quality of Love

I Corinthians 13:4

a. Seeing people from God's point of view

Romans 8:29

b. Both in constant change

Philippians 1:6

c. God is in control

Isaiah 14:27

4. Forbearance – “Making allowance for faults and weakness without judgment”

a. Quality of God's character

Romans 2:4

II Peter 3:15

b. Anticipating in advance to bear that person up

B. Result - unity, oneness of heart minimizes interpersonal strife

II. Differences between male and female

Genesis 1:27

Genesis 1:31

Lord, grant that I may seek more to understand than to be understood - Francis of Assisi

Male and Female

by Julius A. Fritze*

A man is basically a logical, rational creature; a female is basically an emotional creature. A man is more active and more aggressive. He is more emotionally stable and well-controlled about big things than is a woman. However, he is more irritable, excitable and impatient about small things. He is a vain, boastful exhibitionist. He is more optimistic than a woman and more businesslike. He is more ready to admit that he is mistaken - his logic demands it. He is more objective and consistent, which is another evidence of logic. He is more able to concentrate on a consistent basis without his emotions getting in the way . . .

A man is slower to mature, both physically and emotionally. However, a man, all things being equal, grows to a greater depth of maturity. A woman, being an emotional creature, is hindered in reaching this depth . . . The average man is likely, to be more direct, truthful, sportsmanlike and businesslike in communication with his fellowman . . . A man is more democratic in his dealings and is able to keep separate his business and personal relationships . . . A man ordinarily is less religious than a woman.

A man was made to love, a woman was made to be loved. A man does not need love, he needs respect. This he must earn. He will receive it if he is a dependable man . . . The little things count with a woman . . . A woman is a sensitive creature because she is an emotional being. Her sensitivity is necessary, not only to complement her husband, but also to be sensitive to her motherhood.

Therefore, since marriage in its essence is an emotional relationship between a male and a female, and this emotion is love, the responsibility for the success or failure of a marriage weighs far heavier upon the man than it does upon the woman.

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A. Contrasts in Make-up

1. Man's biggest weakness is pride; the woman's, jealousy
2. The woman is more devotional; the man more devoted, deeper
3. The man is physically stronger; bones, muscles and the woman is biologically stronger; girl babies.
 - a. Woman lives longer
 - b. Man matures slower
4. Women want to be needed, understood and wanted

Emptiness and loneliness needs filling.

Warning: Only God can fully meet needs.

B. Use of speech, ideas, feelings

C. Differences sexually

III. Resolving conflicts

Pride leads to arguments.

Proverbs 13:10

Philippians 2:3,4

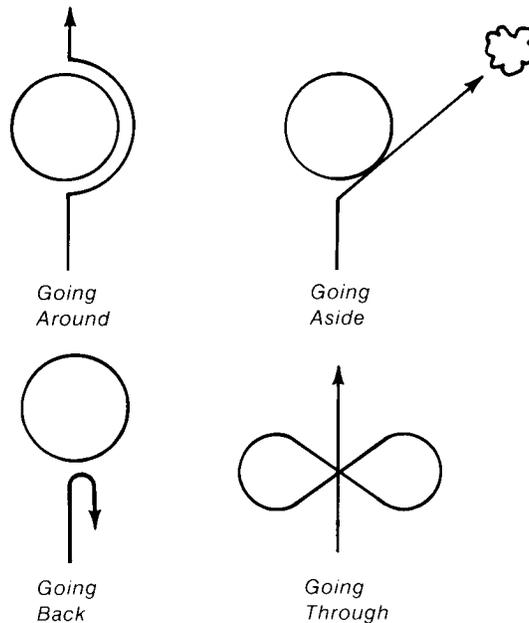
A. Conflicts normal in development

1. Interpersonal, conflict of wills
2. Personal, choices, right and wrong

B. Differences, conflict, problem

Four Ways to Handle Conflict*

1. Conflict is a difference of opinion
 - a. Can be constructive and developmental
 - b. Requires commitment, mutual effort
 - c. Seeks mutually satisfactory resolution

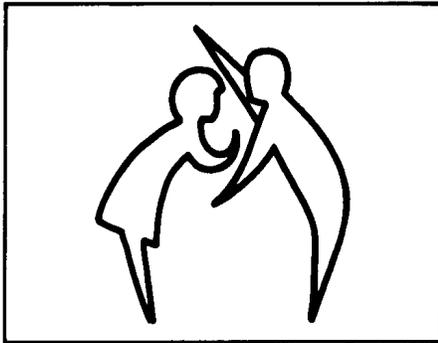


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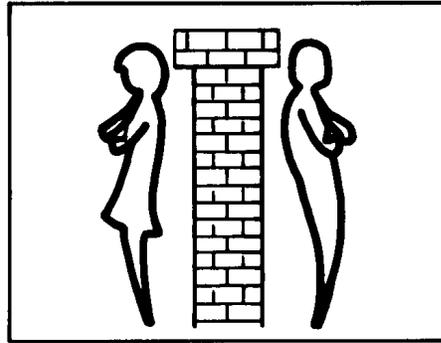
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- a. Unresolved conflict
- b. Resurfaces, affects many areas
- c. Becomes more acute

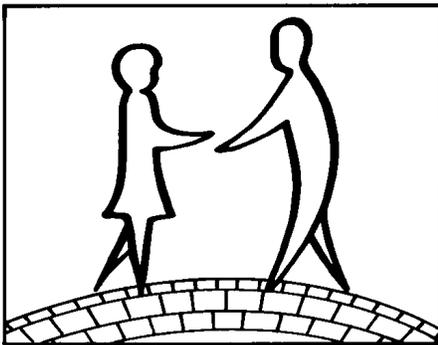
Conflicts



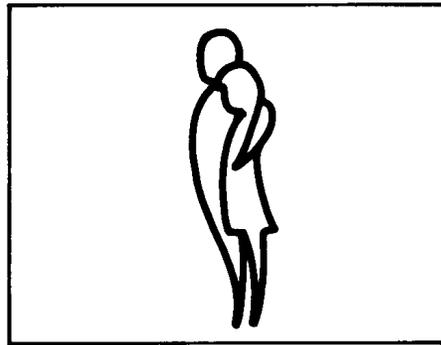
Conflict



Unresolved Conflict



Mutual Effort



Reconciliation

C. How to Resolve

1. Reconciliation

Matthew 5:23,24

Matthew 18:15

Always my move. Never lose by giving in. I Peter 2:23

- a. People not issues
- b. Unity not uniformity, not to think alike, think together

2. Scriptural guidelines

a. Honest

Ephesians 4:15

1) In love

2) Edifying

3) Christlikeness

b. "Don't sin by nursing a grudge." Ephesians 4:26

c. Claim forgiveness

I John 1:7,9

d. Forgive and forget

Ephesians 4:32

Matthew 18:21,22

e. Reconstruction and upbuilding

Ephesians 4:16

3. "Don'ts" in conflict

a. Don't wait for him/her to apologize or refuse to be the first to give in

b. Don't keep bringing it up not allowing the conflict to end

c. Don't attack person rather than conflict -(character assassination)

d. Don't walk out (conflict killed in prime)

SUMMARY

III. One of Christ's primary ministries is reconciliation

A. To God

II Corinthians 5:19

Ephesians 2:16

B. To one another

Ephesians 2:14

Dividing wall of hostility.

I Peter 3:8,9