



**Sermon-based reflections connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, in a small group or independently. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life.*

**Message Info:** People Problems - Dealing With Conflict, 9/10/23 - Conflict is going to happen. Hoping to float through life without a hitch is unrealistic. But that doesn't mean we are powerlessly subject to it. There is a way through that honors God. We can be well-equipped and prepared for when it inevitably comes our way. (*Passages: Genesis 13:5-8, 1 John 4:20, Matthew 5:9, James 4:1-3, 1 Peter 3:7, Matthew 5:23-24*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

Does conflict simply happen, or escalate? What impacts the direction of a conflict towards resolution or strife? What emotions are at the core? How do our boundaries play into conflict?

Read Genesis 13:5-8. What stands out to you in this passage. Why?

Abraham's response was disarming. Instead of pointing fingers or placing blame, he diverted a potentially explosive problem by humbly addressing the real issue right away. What does God say about conflict? How can we honor God with how we choose to handle it?

It's so easy to be defensive, but with the right tools, we can tackle conflict the right way for a better outcome. God says "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9) and "be reconciled to one another" (Matthew 5:23-24). We are called to be unified. Why is making peace often so hard? How can drawing closer to God set us up for success in conflict?

Here are 6 ways to squash conflict:

1. Bring the temperature down - Start with a cool head.
2. Approach first - Be courageous and vulnerable.
3. Approach as a partner - Have a team mindset; look for the win-win.
4. Humility - Examine our own hearts first and ask about other's needs.
5. Get underneath - Speak to the real issue.
6. Wisdom - Ask God for it (James 1:5)

**Weekly Challenge:** Donate food items or volunteer with Shepherd's Table at either Grace Cressona or Grace Tremont.