

## Conflict Resolution



## Interpersonal Relationships

Whereas the Law of Moses regulated the civil as well as the religious lives of the children of Israel, the Gospel Dispensation will deal with interpersonal relationships. As Conflicts “arise when two or more individuals, and/or entities have “competitive or opposing actions of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons),” there is a need to develop life skills that allow individual to communicate and interact with other people, whether individually, or with a group. As is true with everything in life, interpersonal skills must be developed in order to accomplish any worthwhile Resolution.

The development of Interpersonal skills requires that attention be given to verbal, and non-verbal communication, and as we noted in our last segment, listening skills. When the skills are developed an individual is able to bring them into an arena of negotiations where a peaceable resolution can be attained that will be in the best interest of both parties. This requires individuals to work

together in identifying the Conflict to determine the options available in order to accomplish a sound, or healthful Resolution. Being able to communicate ones beliefs and opinions is essential to a peaceful Resolution. I was once told that a successful Resolution is when two opposing parties can sit across from each other, hash out their difference, and when the Resolution is achieved they could then change sides, and the Resolution would be just as appealing. Oh that such would be achievable.

The ideologies of the Gospel Dispensation focus on the individual, their relationship with the Creator, and their relationship with one another, which was actually what the Law sought to accomplish, i.e., “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deuteronomy 6:4–5), and “Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am Jehovah” (Leviticus 19:18).

You’ve heard the phrase, “for every action there is a reaction.” There is nothing a man may do that does not have consequences. Jehovah put it this way, “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day; and the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known” (Deuteronomy 11:26–28). In like manner, Solomon said, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue; And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof” (Proverbs 18:21). Under the Gospel Dispensation, the apostle Paul revealed, “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear” (Ephesians 4:29), as well as the writings of James, saying, “let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:19–20).

Jehovah expects His creation to be responsible, saying, “For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that,

denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11–14). Therefore, each man will give account for that which he says, and that which he does, Jesus saying, “every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:36–37).

Doctrine and Practice! That’s what separates men. In order to have peace there is of necessity a need for a standard of living, and interaction between men. The Conflicts of man arise when two divergent ideologies come together. In order to achieve a righteous Resolution men must agree on the standard by which they will judge their actions. If the standard is carnal in nature then the Resolution will be based upon carnal reasoning. To this type of reasoning, the apostle said, “For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves: but they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding” (2 Corinthians 10:12). On the other hand if the source of ones standard belongs to neither of the individuals, but from a source above them, the Resolution will be objective, rather than subjective. The apostle Paul addressed this issue, saying, “Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby” (Romans 10:1–5).

In dealing with interpersonal relationships it is imperative that the principals involved have an agreed upon standard. Then, and only then can a lasting Resolution be attained, and thereby a lasting peace be accomplished.