

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a part of being in relationship, even in church.

Our goal at First Baptist Church, is to resolve conflict in a godly, healthy manner.

When conflict is resolved, the church's focus can return to the worship of God, through both the group and the individual.

WHY IS THIS A GOAL?

John 17 shows the prayer of Jesus in the hours before his arrest which led to his death and resurrection.

In this prayer, his hope for believers in the future (us) is unity. Unresolved or poorly resolved conflict destroys that unity.

The ability to worship can be blocked due to conflict that is left unresolved.

In order to keep worship alive in our midst, we aim to resolve conflict among our fellowship.

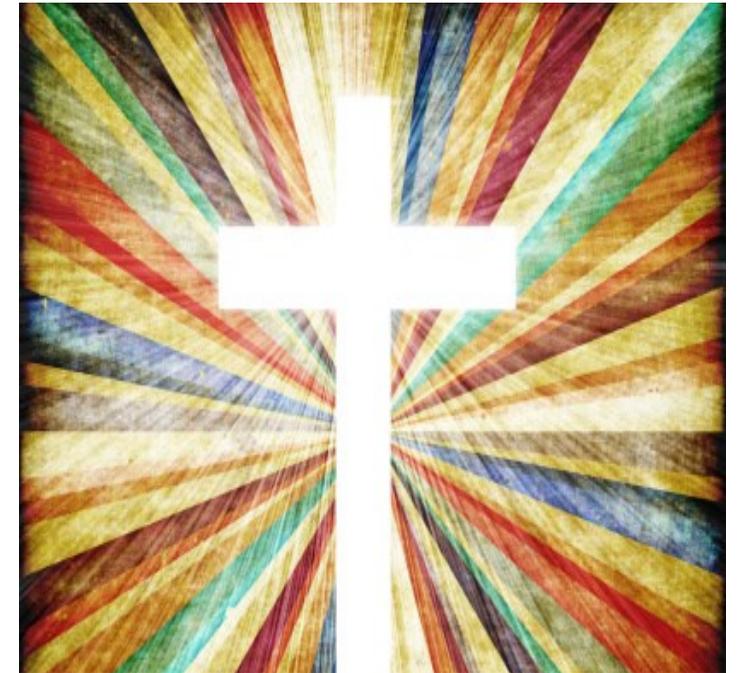


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Living out the Peacemaking Plan



A participant's guide toward understanding and approaching conflict so that resolution can be pleasing to God.

Based on the Peacemaking Plan adopted by First Baptist Church of Kennett Square.

When you encounter conflict related to church ...



STEP 1— ASK YOURSELF:

1. How was the conflict displayed?

For example: I was involved in an argument; I was offended by what someone said about me; I disagree with a church decision

2. What was the root of the conflict?

For example: I have a past history with this person; There was a misunderstanding; We always did something one way and now the church is changing and I don't like it

3. Have I prayed for God's direction in how I should deal with it?

4. What should I do?

- **Can I forgive and forget** this conflict?

I can move on and forget this conflict.
I can worship and be in relationship without further action on this matter.

- **Can I talk to the other person** and look for a way to resolve the conflict?

- **Do I need help** from an Elder/Deacon as I work to resolve this conflict?

Step 2— Talking about the conflict:

1. **First, SPEAK FACT.** Deal with the events of this recent conflict (the argument, the rumor you heard, the decision that upset you, etc.) Talk about the conflict based on facts.

2. **Second, SPEAK ABOUT EMOTIONS.** After facts are established, admit the emotional involvement you have in the conflict. (I have been upset because...; I started yelling because...)

3. **Deal with the situation at hand, then talk about the ROOT of the conflict.** For example, I used to be involved in decision making and this time I was not; I don't think you like me; I never said what you think and you didn't check with me before telling others.

4. **Plan for the future.** Discuss how this situation can be avoided or minimized (causing less damage) in the future.

If needed, an elder or deacon or Pastor can meet with you as a facilitator. This person can help you talk about the facts of the situation, deal with emotions and target the root of the conflict. By having help, someone can help the conversation stay on track.

The goal of assisting in conflict resolution is to resolve the conflict and return the focus to God. The elders and deacons want you to be free to worship with us and will work with you to remove a block to worship due to conflict.

Tips for resolution

With our eyes on God, we can work to resolve conflict in a healthy manner. Below are tips to aid you in resolution.

1. **Avoid e-mail** as a way to communicate about conflict— It is good to write down our feelings and facts, however, sending those ideas through e-mail rarely moves you toward resolution. Speak face-to-face when possible.
2. **Avoid poll taking**— Going to friends and family in order to collect opinions often leads to taking sides and causing division. It can be helpful to talk it out, but it may be wiser to talk to an elder or deacon instead of telling everyone your side of the issue.
3. **Avoid an emotional takeover**— Write down facts so the events stay in perspective.
4. **Denial doesn't resolve**— Face facts, understand your feelings and aim for resolution.
5. **Don't delay**— “I'll deal with it next time” only increases the emotional toll and doesn't solve the situation.
6. **Avoid late night decisions**— Deal with the situation when you are not overly tired or over thinking what happened.
7. **Don't run**— “I'll find a new church” doesn't eliminate the issue. Often conflict is waiting for you there also.