

# Intoxicating Love

Conflict Resolution  
Sunday, June 22, 2014

James 3:17-4:3; Galatians 2:20

## I. Introduction

*“Even the best marriages have problems. Often the difference between a healthy marriage and a defective one is not the number and severity of problems encountered, but in the way problems are dealt with.” R.C. Sproul*

## II. The Cause of Conflict

Conflict happens even to the most of godly people. It happens in marriages as well.

Galatians 2:11-14 – Paul, Peter and Barnabas

*Conflict defined is “a difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.” Ken Sande*

James asks a question to begin a new section of Scripture. He is desirous for peace among the people of God and to deal with the problems they are having relating to one another.

James question is probably one we have asked many times to ourselves. Why is this happening? Why are we fighting? Why are we quarreling?

*“James does NOT say, You are fighting because your hormones are raging; because a demon of anger took up residence; because humans have an aggression gene hardwired in by our evolutionary history; because your father used to react in the same way; because core needs are not being met; because you woke up on the wrong side of the bed and had a bad day at work.” D. Powlison*

Here is James’ explanation:

- A. Your passions are at war within you
- B. You desire
- C. You covet
- D. You do not have
- E. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly

*“When Scripture enters on the scene of conflict, the colliding books are no longer closed. Each is laid down on the table and opened up before God.” D. Powlison*

*“Two key themes lie at the heart of conflict: grasping demand and self-exaltation.” D. Powlison*

*“What tends to produce conflict in your life? Is it comfort, pleasure, recognition, power, control, or acceptance? Here’s how those good things can become “selfish desires” that lead to conflict...These things are not sinful in and of themselves until they turn selfish.” Paul Tripp*

*“A Gospel-centered approach to life sees conflict as ‘unsought one-on-one counseling.’ Tim Lane*

### **III. The Gospel in Conflict Resolution (Andy Farmer)**

1. In the Gospel I have been reconciled to God and live as a minister of reconciliation to others. Therefore I can approach all my conflicts looking for God’s redemptive purposes in them.
2. In the Gospel I have forsaken my own righteousness for the righteousness of Christ. Therefore I can see disagreement or even the sins of others against me as opportunities to die to myself and glorify God.
3. In the Gospel I find my identity in my union with Christ. Therefore I am able to please God no matter what another person does to me. Therefore in conflict the actions of another person never need to determine my actions.
4. In the Gospel I have been forgiven of my sin. I can confess sin knowing God will forgive me of it. I can also extend forgiveness to others, even as God has forgiven me. Therefore I can see conflict as an opportunity to humble myself and love others in ways that only grace can make possible.
5. In the Gospel I see that forgiveness comes with a price heavily paid by the one extending it. Therefore in conflict I will never trivialize the asking of forgiveness, and will never offer it without the intent to fully release the person I am forgiving from the debt he owes to me.
6. In the Gospel I know that God is at work in my circumstances by His Spirit to make me more like Christ. Therefore I can view conflicts as opportunities to grow through adversity, not unpleasant interruptions in my life.
7. In the Gospel I have been called to a life of faith, hope, and love. Therefore I can view conflict resolution as an opportunity to walk out the life of a peacemaker who sows peace to raise a harvest of righteousness.

### **IV. Conclusion**