

# RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN THE CHURCH

By Jay Fullman

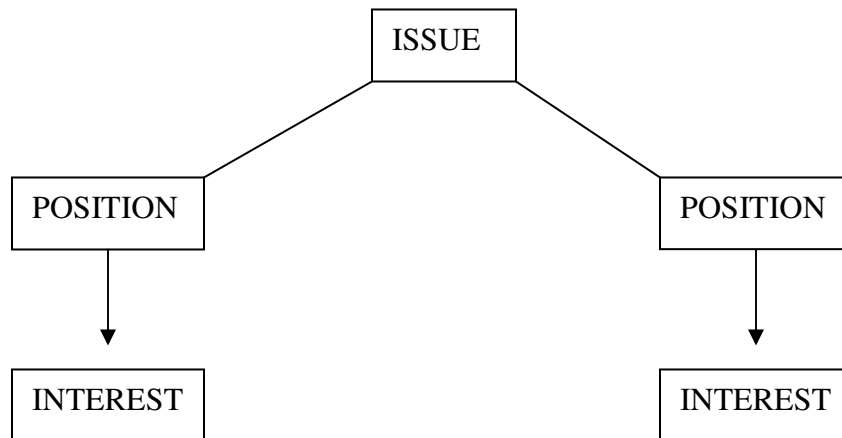
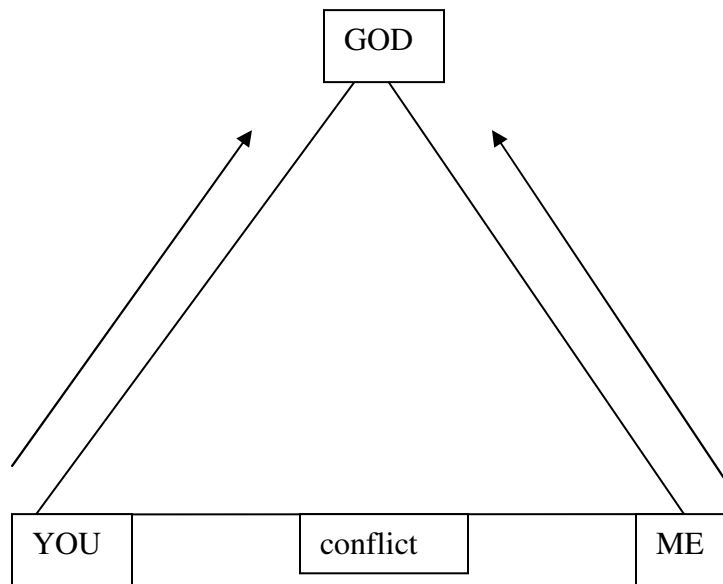
January 2006

- I. Why we need to study conflict resolution in the Church.
  - a. We, as Christians, are each, individually, valuable and necessary members (parts) of the Body of Christ. I Corinthians 12:12-27.
  - b. We, as Christians, are brothers and sisters in Christ, who have an obligation to love one another. Matt. 12:46-50; Eph. 2:19-22; I Peter 2:17; I John 4:19-21.
  - c. We, as Christians, are given a ministry of reconciliation. II Cor. 5:17-20.
  - d. We, as Christians, are called to be peacemakers. Matt. 5:9.
  
- II. The attitude we have in a conflict situation is critical.
  - a. Wrong attitudes come from jealousy, selfish ambition, lying, earthly wisdom, the Devil, uncontrolled passions, covetousness and wrong motives. James 3:13 – 4:3.
  - b. Conflicts arise from not being loyal to Christ and His Word, but to people (including self). I Cor. 1:10-13; Proverbs 6:16-19; Proverbs 6:20-23.
  - c. The attitude we, as Christians, should have is to take on the attitude of Christ: the interests of others must be more important than your own. Philippians 2:1-8; I Cor. 10:24; I Cor. 10:31 – 11:1; Romans 12:9-21.
  - d. We must treat our brother or sister with love and prayer. Matt. 5:43-45a.
  
- III. God's Conflict Resolution Process.
  - a. If we know that a fellow Christian believes we have harmed them, we should immediately take steps to resolve the problem, and be reconciled to them. Matt. 5:23-24.
  - b. If a Christian sins against us, we must do the following to attempt a resolution and reconciliation:
    1. Go to the brother or sister in private to address the problem; if unsuccessful,

2. Take 2 or 3 witnesses to address the problem; if unsuccessful,
3. Take it before the church; if unsuccessful,
4. Do not fellowship the brother or sister who refuses to repent of the sin. Matthew 18:15-17.

c. Examples of conflict resolution process in practice.

1. Gal. 2:11-21
2. II Cor. 2:5-11. See also I Cor. 5:1-8.



## Guide for Resolution and Reconciliation

1. I will be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.  
James 1:19
2. I will love my perceived adversary and will pray for him or her.  
Matthew 5:44
3. I will love my neighbor as myself, meaning I will have my best interest in mind as well as the interest of the other disputant(s). Mark 12:31
4. I will be hard on issues and soft on people. Ephesians 4:25-27, 32
5. I will not interrupt or talk while others are talking.  
Proverbs 10:19
6. I will not speak harshly of others during or after the negotiation.  
James 1:26
7. I will speak the truth in love. Ephesians 4:15
8. I will listen and make a concerted effort to understand the issues and interests of the other party. Philippians 2:3-4
9. I will work toward a collaborative resolution through the collaborative process. Matthew 5:23-24
10. I will, to the best of my ability, demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit through my behavior. Galatians 5:22
11. I will be accountable to carry out agreements made in the mediation or negotiation. Matthew 5:37
12. I will encourage others who are not at the negotiation table to accept the agreements made in order to maintain the unity of the Spirit in a bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3