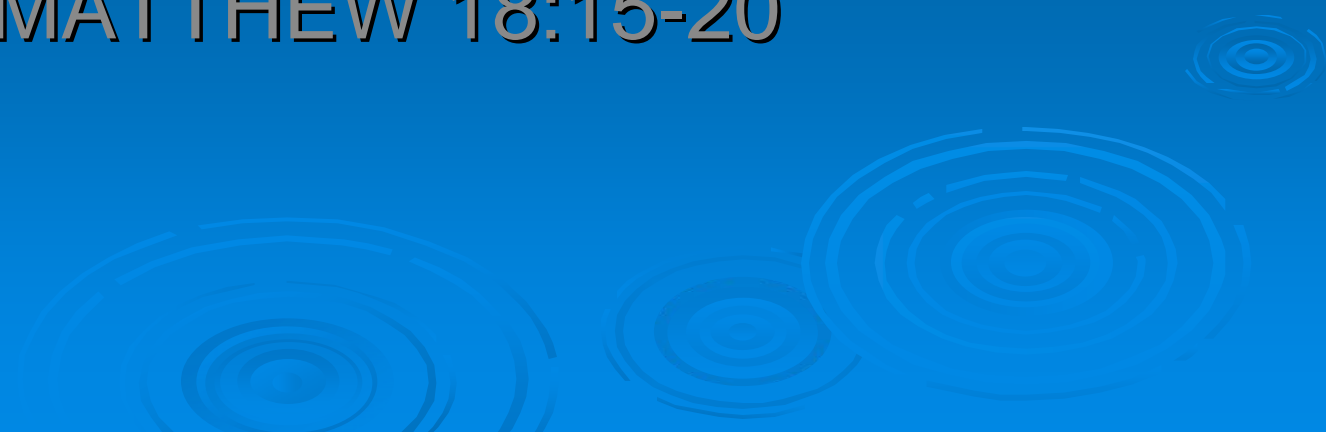


THE CHALLENGE OF CONFLICT

TAKING THE FIRST STEP

MATTHEW 18:15-20



CONVERSATION

- Matthew 18:15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone."
- Common occurrence:
 - Disagreement
 - Find allies
 - Form coalitions and polarize
- Changed Behavior: Conversation

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler

- Focus on what you really want.
- Look for when the conversation becomes crucial (opinions vary, stakes high, emotions strong).
- Create a safe environment for dialogue
- Understand your own perspective.
- STATE your path (Share your facts, Tell your story, Ask for other's paths, Talk tentatively, Encourage testing)
- Explore other's paths (Ask, Mirror, Paraphrase).
- Move to action (decide how to decide, document and follow up).

FACILITATION

- Matthew 18:16 “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.”
- We all need help sometimes
- Mediation
 - Neutral not ally
 - Uninterrupted opportunity to tell your story
 - Private
 - Personal (more satisfying outcome; DIY).

PUBLICATION

- Matthew 18:17 (a) “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church.”
- An advisory function (Costantino and Merchant).
- The church brings pressure to bear on the disputants
- Less control over outcomes.

LITIGATION (HUMILIATION)

- Matthew 18:17 (b) “But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.”
- Someone else decides for you.
 - Lose control
 - Lose choice
 - Lose options
- Contextual theme is RESTORATION, Matthew 18:11-14, not condemnation!

CONFLICT CONTEXTS

- Matthew 5:21-26
- Romans 12:18
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
 - Ephesians 4:32
 - Colossians 3:12-13
- Philippians 2:14-16
- 2 Thessalonians 5:13

“What has always seemed incongruent about these matters is that people want to be accepted as they are, but will not accept God’s word as it is.”

Jeremiah Tatum, Pulaski Street church of Christ bulletin, 2008

Be reconciled to God!

2 Corinthians 5:20

Be reconciled to your brother!

Matthew 5:24

