

Resolving Conflict: Week 6 - Loving Forbearance

1. Learn to look for the good things in others

“While being discerning is a very good thing, if we do not grow in our tolerance of others at the same time as we grow in our ability to discern their weaknesses, we will become critical, condemnatory, judgmental monsters.”¹

“One of the best ways for us to become more tolerant is to make it a practice to identify things in others that are admirable.”²

2. Remember the degree to which God has made you dependent on others

“The fact is that He has designed the body of Christ to be interdependent.”³

“Even as Christians we sometimes fall prey to the notion that, because we are complete in Christ and because He is our sufficiency, we therefore do not really need anyone else to live a faithful Christian life. Yet the idea completely contradicts Scripture. God has made us and redeemed us not only for Himself but for each other. We would never have heard of God or of the gospel had it not been for someone leading us to Christ or providing material for us to read. We could not have grown in faith and obedience had it not been for Christian teachers and friends who helped us and guided us. We cannot possibly fulfill our own ministry, whatever it is, without being mutually dependent on others.”⁴

3. Consider that God might want to change your opinion as a result of your listening to someone else

“Remind yourself that God made the other person with his own unique personality for His own purposes (which probably have little to do with making life easier for you).”⁵

“If I am unwilling to put up with this person, I just might miss out on an important life lesson.”⁶

4. Don't major on minor doctrinal differences

¹ Lou Priolo, *Resolving Conflict: How to Make, Disturb, and Keep Peace* (P & R Publishing, 2016), p. 105.

² Priolo, *Resolving Conflict*, p. 105.

³ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict*, p. 106.

⁴ John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984). 318 quoted in: Priolo, *Resolving Conflict*, p. 107

⁵ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict*, p. 118.

⁶ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict*, p. 108.

5. When you find yourself passing judgment on someone or being critical of that person, pray for him

“One of the best ways for you to become more tolerant is to bring the person you are critical of before the throne of grace. You will find it much harder to be so judgmental of someone for whom you have been regularly praying.”⁷

6. Make it your goal to have a biblically programmed conscience

“Guard against legalistic and judgmental attitudes that raise nonsin issues to the level of sin.”⁸

“When you judge things to be sinful that are not clearly delineated as such (at least in principle) in the Scriptures, you wrongly judge not only your brother who did the misjudged deed, but also the Bible for not condemning the deed, and the Author of the Bible, who apparently forgot to include it in Holy Writ. Think of how grave a matter it is to make such a presumptuous accusation against God.”⁹

7. Constantly sacrifice your own desires for the benefit of others

“You may think that your way is the better way. Don’t go into the conflict with a ‘my way or the highway’; ‘I’ve got to get him to do things my way’ attitude. Instead, ask yourself, ‘Would it really be a terrible thing (a sin) if we did things his way?’”¹⁰

8. Remind yourself frequently how forbearing God has been with you.

“Rather than destroying every person the moment he or she sins, God graciously holds back his judgment (cf. Rom. 3:25). He saves sinners in a physical and temporal way from what they deserve (see note on 1 Tim. 4:10), to show them his saving character, that they might come to him and receive salvation that is spiritual and eternal.”¹¹

⁷ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict.*, pp. 109-110.

⁸ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict.*, p. 118.

⁹ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict.*, p. 93.

¹⁰ Priolo, *Resolving Conflict.*, p. 119.

¹¹ MacArthur Study Bible Notes